

# THEOSOPHY

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*Trine Being*

(contd.)



ANTONIO ROSMINI

# THEOSOPHY

Volume 3

## **Trine Being**

(contd.)

*Translated by*

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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*

SP: *Society and its Purpose*

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).

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

*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.

*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.

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# **Book Three**

## **TRINE BEING**

(contd.)



# SECTION FIVE

## THE ONTOLOGICAL ORDER OF ABSTRACT CONCEPTS

### CHAPTER 1

**Philosophy must make known the relationships between  
the abstract concepts it uses**

1170. Looking back over what I have so far dealt with, I investigated the connection between the three supreme forms of being in each of the forms, that is, how they were connected in the ens as subject (Section One), how in the object (Section Two), and how in what is moral (Section Three).

But each of the three forms can be thought in two modes: as *subsistent* and as *abstract*. Hence, because each part of the triple investigation subdivides into two, I had to investigate the union of the three forms in each subsistent form and in each abstract form.

This led me to the origin of the twofold nature of human thought. Human thought is *concrete* when centred on *subsistent things*, but *abstract* when centred on a part of them that does not subsist on its own. Every possible thought, all that is knowable, is reduced to these two supreme classes of thought, and their source lies in the forms of being. When these forms are thought as subsistent, they provide concrete thought which is ontologically first and to which all subsequent concrete thoughts are subordinate. When thought as pure abstract

forms, they provide abstract thought which is ontologically first and from which all other abstract thoughts derive. Moreover, the forms unify in being. Thus all human thoughts take on an order, which points the way to the theory of human thought. No thought is exempt from this theory, because all possible thoughts are grouped into classes, whose principle has been found.

1171. But investigation of the connection that necessarily and naturally unites the primal forms led to another investigation, no less important. I was forced to it by the following difficulty, which arose spontaneously and, if not solved, would destroy the theory: 'You said that everything thought is being and forms of being. You investigated the connection between the supreme forms of being when considered as subsistent forms and abstract forms. But in doing so, you introduced a new entity that is neither being nor forms: you introduced something in between the forms, the connection itself that unites them. And you cannot say that being is the connection between the forms you have discussed, because being is in the forms, not between them. Even if we grant that being is the connection between the forms, this does not explain the different ways they are connected; being is one and totally simple, but the connections between the forms vary, as you have shown.' To solve this serious difficulty I had to turn to the theory of *relationships* (Section Four), because every kind of connection constitutes a relationship.

Examination of the nature of relationships showed me that 'the concept of a relationship does not include the concept of an entity that is in between the two relative entities and different from them'. I defined a relationship generally as 'an entity that cannot be thought without thinking the two entities between which the relationship exists, although the entity is one of them' ([cf. 903]). This explanation of the true nature of a relationship solves the difficulty at once. We do not need to introduce in between the forms of being an entity different from the forms — the relationship can be found in the forms themselves, not outside them.

I demonstrated this when I noted that the forms are relative to each other through their essence, so that the relationship resides within, not outside, them. To settle all doubt, I investigated the



nature of the relationship between being and the forms, and then the relationship between the forms as subsistent and as abstract. In all these investigations I saw on every occasion that the relationship lay in one extreme as in its subject and in the other extreme as in the term of the relationship. An in-between entity was never needed; such an entity is conceived solely through abstraction when the mind divides the relationship's *foundation* present in the subject from the subject itself of the relationship; alternatively, an in-between entity seems to be present due to a defect in the proposition which says nothing about the relationship's true subject (cf. *Logica*, 421).

1172. This investigation led me to distinguish necessarily between *subsistent* and *abstract relationships*. As I said, subsistent relationships are the four relationships of origin that constitute the distinction between the divine persons. In these, both the subject or principle of the relationship and the term are subsistent, except that the double procession of the Son and Holy Spirit in the Father has only one subsistence, with the result that the persons are not quadrupled. We can say therefore that whenever the essence of a particular ens is the subject and foundation of a relationship, the relationship subsists in and with the ens. But because in finite entia, essence differs from subsistence, the relationship of the subsistence pre-exists as possible in the essence in the way that the ens itself also pre-exists as possible in the essence. Hence, just as the subsistent ens is contingent, so the relationship also subsists contingently. If the subject or foundation of a relationship should be an accident and not the essence of a contingently subsistent ens, the relationship subsists in both an accidental mode and a contingent mode, in which case it pre-exists in the *full* (or fullest) *specific* essence. We therefore have, as I said,

1. necessary subsistent relationships;
2. contingent subsistent relationships, either substantial or accidental;
3. possible relationships, of one kind or another, but not abstract relationships except in the first manner of abstraction (abstraction from subsistence), and
4. abstract relationships.

In *contingently subsistent relationships*, the relationship's term can subsist or not subsist, that is, be an abstract. Thus, in

anything animate the *sentient principle* is a subsistent relationship, and the *felt*, which is its term, is equally subsistent, but in anything finite and intelligent, the intellective principle is a subsistent relationship, and the understood element (its term) can be both an abstract (non-subsistent entity) and a subsistent entity. All these varieties pre-exist in the possible relationships between the abstract essences of these subsistent entities.

After I had noted how all relationships exist, as in their subject, in one of the entities that relationships unite, and in the other entity as in their term, the way was opened for me to demonstrate that relationships, by their very nature, perfect the subject to which they pertain. This led to the discussion of order (of which relationships are the cause) and of perfection in general. But order and perfection are always predicated of the subject, not of the term (provided this is not also a subject). I reflected therefore that the first of the forms of Being, as subjective, can never *in se* constitute a term of any relationship; in all conceivable relationships it must always have the role of principle. On the other hand, the second and third forms can act as term. Thus, we saw how these two forms, considered precisely as terms of relationships, are called *truth* and *good*, which is the origin of every truth and every good for any subject whatsoever capable of them.

These investigations, by their nature, resulted in the theory of abstracts. I used abstracts to [demonstrate] that relationships have no existence distinct from the extremes they united, they are in fact the extremes themselves which, seen by the mind in the object that contains them, are by their very nature connected to and refer to one other. As a result I had no need to consider relationships as a separate class of abstracts. Indeed we can find relationships (those that are abstracts) simply by analysing the entities constituting their extremes. We will therefore find in an ens not only all other abstracts, but also relatives and relationships, and thus avoid the danger of drawing the theory of abstracts from the class of abstract relationships. In fact abstract relationships will automatically classify themselves as the analysis proceeds.

1173. I will begin the argument therefore from its starting point, indicating the way the mind deduces abstracts from what is absolutely subsistent, and the order in which it deduces them.

Knowledge of the nature of this deduction will allow us to understand the nature and meaning of these concepts. Next, knowledge of the order of their deduction will furnish us with a solid principle. This principle will enable us to give an ordered distribution to the vast assortment of abstractions, and stop them swirling about like dust, as it were, in our minds and clouding our view. This will also prevent haphazard procedure in speculative sciences, which would be the case if we used many intermingled and entangled abstractions without seeing the relationships between them.

## CHAPTER 2

### The distinction between what is logically first and theosophically first

1174. To carry out this intention, we need to look at the reasoning I followed in the part of philosophy I have so far dealt with.

I started from *ideal being*, whose presence to our spirit and the evidence for it I discussed in the ideological works.

This idea provided the principles of reasoning and of deductions, and gave me clear certainty of these, all of which I discussed more extensively in Logic.

Applied to our spirit, this idea revealed the spirit's nature and subjective laws, and the laws which govern the spirit's function and development. I dealt with these points in Psychology.

Finally *ideal being* guided me to the knowledge that Being itself had to exist free from every addition or limitation whatsoever, and exist in the three infinite modes I indicated.

Discovery of this absolute Being in its three forms necessarily meant that everything pertaining to or relative to being which presented itself to our mind in any mode whatsoever had to be present in this Being in an eminent mode, proper to it and to come from it. Otherwise, the Being would not be absolute Being, infinite in every way.

Everything that presents or can present itself to our thought is contained in the three categories because the only things that can be are either 1. *ideas* contained in the category of what is objective, or 2. real entities, contained in the category of what is subjective, or 3. moral entities, contained in the category of the moral. We have seen how real entities and moral entities originate through creation by absolute Being. Moreover, we have partly seen how ideal being communicated to human beings proceeds from absolute Being by means of an eternal, divine abstraction.

1175. But this last fact presents the mind with an antinomy.

On the one hand *ideal being* is the evident point from which thought moves in all its reasonings. It is therefore something

*first* in all that is knowable; all other information receives its evidence or its certainty from it. On the other hand, ideal being tells us that it is not first; it points us to something prior to itself, that is, to absolute Being, from which it comes. This Being therefore seems to be truly *first* because prior to ideal being, which is also *first*, from which thought starts.

The antimony quickly disappears when we bear in mind that being subsists in three synthesising forms except for the internal order of procession. There are therefore three categories, none of which is either prior or posterior to the other, except for the processional relationships. Consequently, we have to conceive three firsts in these three inconfusable categories. Leaving aside the first of the third category, which is first in the order of perfection and not needed for solving the antinomy, we will examine the first of the category of object and the first of the category of subject. We see immediately two firsts that synthesise with each other and in no way contradict each other because each is first in its own category and not in the same category.

1176. Because the object is what is known, the first in the category of object is the first among what is known, and because the subject is the real, the first in the category of subject is the first among subjects. To be subject and to be known have two different concepts so that to be known is not the same as to be subject. Hence, what is first as known cannot be the same as what is first as subject — subject and known, as such and having a relationship of diversity, exclude each other.

What is known exists in relationship to a mind and constitutes what is knowable or known. When we speak about the knowable and the known, we are speaking about something that is knowable or known relative to our mind. The first known, relative to any mind whatsoever and therefore relative to the human mind, always pertains to the absolute first known; if it did not, the mind that saw it as first would be mistaken, its evidence would be false. But if it pertains necessarily to the first absolute known, which is certainly the known of the infinite mind, this known does not have to be in all its actuality. If it were, it would be an infinite act, to which the finite mind is disproportionate. For this reason the first known of the human mind is indeed the whole of objective being, but hidden in virtuality, as I have said. However, any actuality manifested by

objective being is always evident, always a direct light, because anything that is *per se* objective is such through its essence; otherwise it would not be objective. The first known of the human mind has the following two characteristics: 1. it is an appurtenance of objective being and therefore is truth which essentially cannot deceive, and 2. it does not show in itself the personhood of objective being, as this remains hidden from the mind's intuition.

If, as a result of this second characteristic, it is possible to discover that objective being, intuited by the human mind, is not only undetermined and objective but also subsistent and personal, this discovery can be made solely by reasoning, not by intuition. If this can be done by reasoning and not intuition, being, as object of human intuition, always remains undetermined and impersonal; nevertheless, we know but do not see that being subsists also personally. Unable to see being subsistent in this way but simply reasoning to it, we do not have perceptive and positive knowledge of it; we have only a cognition resulting from abstractions and logical determinations, a cognition I call negative ideal cognition. Consequently, because subsistence and personhood are essential to and constitutive of being, personal Being, discovered through reasoning, is not the identical, undetermined being of intuition, although the latter is contained in the former. This is precisely the case when the specific difference is added to a generic idea: the ens that makes the generic idea real is not identical to the ens that makes the specific difference real, although the realisation of the generic idea is also in the specific difference. For example, a human being is not identical to an animal, although what is animal is in a human being. A living body is not identical to an inanimate organism, although the organism is in the living body. *A fortiori* a universal essence is not identical to a realised ens, although the essence is seen in this ens. Much more is ideal being not identical to absolute Being, although it is in absolute Being.

1177. The light of the human mind is therefore first in the order of the humanly knowable, and is called the logical or ideological first. But because this light, which is undetermined being, makes us know that Being subsists personally, this is always a cognition which is not first but second relative to ourselves, a consequent cognition, not a first principle. Similarly,

when we know through reasoning that Being must personally subsist (although we do not see this personal Being but infer it from what we see), a similar deontological reasoning leads us to understand that this personal, objective Being must be totally evident light, and that the being which for us is the first known must be a ray of that light. As we continue to reason, without ever intuiting, we correctly infer that the ray comes, in the order of existence, from that sun, and therefore that the first known of human beings comes from a more complete first known which they do not intuit. Hence we infer that this first known, not intuited by ourselves, has a precedence of existence over the first known that we intuit. But this other first known does not have a precedence of evidence. Our first known has the same evidence and the same logical necessity, except that this evidence of logical necessity is manifested to us; the first is not manifested. The evidence is therefore an identical property in both, a simple property which admits neither greater nor less, a logical necessity without degree and always the same. To be first in the order of the knowable simply means to be evident to intuition. Hence, although the object of intuition can be greater or less, the evidence and firstness of the object are identical, because the object is always essentially light. That which is therefore prior to the *ideological first* is not prior because it has a greater evidence, but because the evident object is greater. Thus, creation manifests an *evident first* to human beings, which as evident is absolutely first and has nothing more evident above it. But because this evident first requires an object that is certainly endowed with the same identical evidence (not a prior evidence but a more complete object because it has subsistence and personhood), we must admit by a reasoned inference that there is, in addition to the logical and ideological first, a *first* in the order of subsistence called *theosophical first*, which we do not see by its light but by the ray of its light and this ray is our ideological first.

### CHAPTER 3

#### Theosophical abstraction

1178. The *evident first*, in so far as manifested to human intuition, is therefore one first, but as hidden; it is another that has in itself the indistinct first. Both have identical evidence, but the evidence of the hidden first is not communicated to us.

I will use this teaching to illustrate the *abstraction* I call *theosophical*. Without knowledge of this abstraction, we cannot ascertain the relationships of different, abstract ideas.

1179. We know real entia in two ways, either by *perception* (*positive* knowledge) or by reasoning, without perception (*negative* knowledge).

But it does not matter how and with what kind of knowledge we come to know some real entia, we can carry out *abstraction* on them, not as real<sup>1</sup> in themselves but as known by the mind. We have therefore two kinds of abstraction, an abstraction whose foundation is real entia positively known (called *ascending* or *common abstraction*), and another whose foundation is real entia negatively known (*descending abstraction*).

Among negatively known real entia is God, who, as I said, is the theosophical first. God is absolute Being and, as Absolute Being, all the most universal abstracts can be considered as abstracts from Absolute Being. Because the most universal abstracts manifest essences, they do not have any subsistence. However, because they are seen by our mind, they are not nothing; they must be entities in a subsistence of some kind, that is, in absolute Being, which unifies in itself all degrees of being. Moreover their subsistence in this Being must be very simple, because absolute Being is one and most simple. Hence, these essences must have their reality in this Being, not divided from each other (as they appear to the human mind), but in another manner, unified in their subsistence. The human mind sees that this *MUST* be the case, but does not see that it *IS* the case or how it is positively the case; it can consider the essences as ideal, as

<sup>1</sup> Real things *in se* admit only material division. Cf. *Psychology*, 1: 563–564, 706.



abstracts which through the action of an abstracting mind have been extracted from subsistent Being in so far as it is known. I call this *theosophical abstraction*, which pertains to the genus of *descending abstraction*.

1180. Note: *common, ascending abstraction* is not sufficient for the formation of abstracts (cf. *NE*, 3: 1454–1455; *Rinnovamento*, 115 ss.) due to their infinity which was acknowledged by the Scholastics who were more faithful to Aristotle.<sup>2</sup> The number of entia we perceive, from which we abstract, is limited, whereas *abstract essence* is universal and infinite. Pure abstraction does not bring our mind to intuit this essence, in which the mind intuits infinitely more than what is realised in a limited number of similar entia, from which it seemed to draw the essence. This ‘more’ is possibility, infinity, immutability and the other divine attributes of an idea; they are in no way abstracted from a finite ens for the simple reason they are not in a finite ens. Ideology is content to verify the fact: it says, ‘Ideas certainly have these properties, of which perceived real entities bear no trace.’ And from this it concludes the least it can conclude: ‘The human mind cannot extract these properties from its experience of sensible entities; they must come to it from elsewhere.’ As it continues to observe the order of procession which the properties have, it sees that the first idea must be of undetermined being, and that this idea contains all the properties of ideas, properties which have an infinite quality and are reduced to possibility. From this observation the mind once again concludes the least it can: ‘The first idea of undetermined being must exist in the mind, before the mind begins its thought movement and is indispensable to this movement’ — this is the meaning of the word ‘innate’ that the mind gives to this idea. At this point, ideology (the science of ideas considered as observable facts before the spirit) comes to a halt. Logic takes over, seeking a criterion of truth and certainty. It finds this criterion precisely in the transcendent properties of ideas obtained by ideological observation: necessity, objectivity and eternity. Logic thus discovers the truth and certainty of knowledge; in other words, it sees that the

<sup>2</sup> ‘The infinite, in so far as a form undetermined by matter, has the nature of something perfect’\* (*S. T.*, I, q. 8, art.1). This *form* is the *abstract essence* I am speaking about.

idea of being is a *visible light*, which needs no other light to verify it because it cannot be other than it appears. It concludes that this idea is a logical first. When ideology has established the principle of knowledge, and logic has discovered that this principle is also the first principle of certainty, human thought can proceed: reasoning, which produces all other branches of knowledge, is assured; the formation and certainty of all that is knowable is provided for, nothing else is required.

1180a. But a part, a most noble part, of what is knowable is precisely theosophy. It deals with being and, unlike ideology, is not satisfied with knowing that being appears as a fact present to the human mind, the first fact in the order of cognitions and their source. Nor is it satisfied, as logic is, with acknowledging that being is necessarily the thing that appears and is therefore truth and a criterion. Theosophy goes further and asks: 'Where does this being, with its transcendent qualities, originate? Its qualities cannot come from individual, finite entia, nor from the human soul, because being is infinite, necessary, immutable, objective, etc.' An ens superior to the mind and to finite things must have given it to the mind, which through it had its beginning. Without a subsistent, infinite Ens, the presence of this being to the human mind could not be explained. The fact therefore, demonstrated by ideology, that ideal being cannot be extracted by abstraction from finite entia entails the consequence that theosophy draws from it: 'Ideal being is given to the mind by an infinite Ens.'

Moreover, the transcendent properties are proper to intuited being. This being is something opposite to the human mind that intuit it. Hence, either it must have an existence of its own, pre-scinding from the existence of the human mind, or be a deceptive illusion. But logic demonstrates that it cannot be merely an appearance, but must be precisely the thing that appears. It must therefore exist in itself. To the human mind however it appears only as object, and anything that is pure object does not have an existence of its own because to have an existence of its own means to have a subjective existence. This object therefore [must] be a subject in objective form but, as subject, does not appear to the mind. Consequently, the human mind intuit it limitedly and imperfectly: it sees its impersonal objectivity but its personhood remains veiled.

Theosophy however continues with its reasoning and, after concluding that being which appears impersonal to the human mind must in itself personally subsist, asks: 'How does impersonal being which appears to the mind and is objective differ from personal being which necessarily exists in itself?' The answer is found by applying the doctrine of identity, according to which the addition of personhood to objective being makes this being lose its identity. Consequently, objective being does not admit the same definition, because a definition must express all the essence of what is defined. In fact, it is essential to being to be subject, so that if being is defined in such a way that the real subject is not included in the definition, we have the definition of pure, impersonal objective being but not of objective being as a subsistent subject. Objective being intuited by the human mind differs therefore from personal, subsistent, objective being, that is, from God. This loss of identity arises from a diminution made by the mind — the human mind can remove something essential from an ens, thus making it become something else. Nevertheless, despite the fact that one being is not another being, personal Being has in itself objective being, just as the less is in the greater without the greater necessarily being the more. Hence the transcendent properties of impersonal, objective being are the *identical properties* of subsistent, personal Being, except that in the latter they are present in a more eminent mode in which they subsist undivided. These arguments coincide with the demonstration of the divine existence I gave in *A New Essay* (cf. *NE*, 3: 1456–1460).

1181. We have seen that the *being* of intuition exists in itself in God who is absolute Being and that the transcendent properties in both are identical. The vision of being is therefore a vision of something divine but not of God himself. To see God we must see everything essential to him, but our mind does not see this; it does not see, for example, his personal subsistence; it sees only something pertaining to him. This something seen separate from the rest is not God; it does not constitute the divine essence which due to its simplicity cannot be divided by anything, not even by our mind, without its being destroyed and losing its identity. It is like a person seeing a black spot in the distance: he cannot truthfully say he sees a human being, because a black spot is not a human being. But granted it is a

human being, dressed in black, who appears to the eye as something else and thus loses his identity, the black seen by the eye is nevertheless something pertaining to the person and is identical to the black of the person.

There is of course a difference of being between the personal subsistence of being and the impersonal *being* of intuition: the former, like the subsistence pertaining to the essence of being, is itself *being*, while the latter lacks personal subsistence. And because the difference of being relative to being is a difference of essence, the difference constitutes an essential diversity. Nevertheless, there is something common to both: in one (ideal being), this common element is all its *essence*; in the other (God), it is not his *essence* but is contained in his essence, without distinction from the rest. Thus the *common element* is in both God and *ideal being* but not in the same mode, just as a generic or specific concept is common to entia of the same genus or species. Hence, this common element cannot be called, as Aristotle calls it, universal.<sup>3</sup> The common essence is, in God, in a more perfect mode than the mode that is seen. This seen essence is contemplated by itself separate from God, that is, as it stands before the intuition of the human mind. This explains why the essence of being, intuited by the mind, is identical in God, and yet in God it is in a more perfect mode, which changes the essence because of the greater perfection it acquires. Hence, because the common element (being), considered in God and with this very act of considering it, ceases to be common and becomes proper, we must, in order to find the pure common element, ascend to another, higher abstraction and find the common element of the common element. This is substantially what St. Thomas says so acutely: 'A common nature must have some being in each of the things of which it is predicated but it will differ according to the degree of perfection present.'<sup>4</sup> In our case, the common nature is being. But being, before the

<sup>3</sup> 'What is common does not, in itself, make the commonness of a thing or of a concept universal. Hence (divine) essence can be said to be common but not universal'\* (St. Thomas, In I, D. 19, q. 4, a. 2, ad 2). In other words, 'common' can also mean what is *identically* many things. He adds that 'universal', not 'common', means the indefinite possibility of individuals.

<sup>4</sup> In I, D. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1. [*App.*, no. 1].

human mind, has a different existence from being in God. The latter, where there is a subsistent subject, is more perfect than the former, where there is simply an object. The *common* nature escapes us therefore, because it admits degrees of perfection, and these make it different from itself. Hence, to find the common element we must abstract from these degrees, and it is, as I said, 'the common element of the common element'.

1182. Hence, there is no apparent contradiction when we say that in God there is the identical essence of being that shines before our mind, and at the same time say that the essence is there in another, more perfect mode and that God and the essence of being are not identical in the abstract mode in which the essence appears to our mind. In short, I am simply saying that if we suppose that there is a mind that can do all this, the essence of impersonal being can be obtained by a mental abstraction from the divine essence; all we need to do is leave aside the personal terms of the divine essence. This abstraction (which, as I said, had to be carried out in the act of creation) makes the resultant abstract perfect; it is not like the abstracts we extract from finite entia — from these we cannot obtain the transcendent properties of the abstracts themselves. In divine abstraction, however, which we suppose the creator carried out, we have abstracts endowed with their transcendent properties because the subsistent object on which the abstraction was carried out had in itself those properties which, precisely as transcendent, can be only divine.

In fact, we ourselves make a similar abstraction by theosophical speculation: we see that an abstraction of this kind must have been made by God; if he had not made it, he would not have communicated to us *ideal being*, which has the nature of abstract without subsistence. Hence, we, in some way, repeat the divine abstraction by theosophical abstraction.

Before I examine the order in which this abstraction is carried out, a difficulty has to be solved.

1183. We have seen that being, as it appears to our mind, is actually not complete. How then can it serve as an evident point and, as I said, as a logical first, on whose clarity depend the truth and the certainty of theosophical arguments which make us go beyond it?

Theosophical arguments make us go beyond it in a certain

sense but not in every sense. As we have seen, ideal being is in divine objective being; it is an appurtenance of God and has properties that transcend the whole order of the finite. Its evidence also is such that there is no other higher evidence, although what is evident can be greater. Ideal being leads us beyond itself in the case of subsistence, which it lacks, but does not lead us beyond itself in the case of evidence. It is therefore a first which leads us to another first, which is itself with the addition of subsistence and subjectivity. This should not surprise us if we recall the nature of the three categorical forms of being, each of which must have its own first: a first in the category of object and a first in the category of subject; I leave aside the third for the moment. But the first in the category of object does not subsist if the subject is not communicated to it. Hence, if the subject remains hidden, it remains hidden both as communicator and communicated. If it remains hidden as communicated, the subjective existence of the object remains hidden, with only the impersonal object remaining clear. Thus, to know the object as subjectively subsistent we would have to intuit being in both of its primal forms, yet only one, the objective, is given to human intuition. Consequently human intuition sees only the impersonal object, so that the human mind sees being in one form only, the objective form. However the whole of being must be contained in this one form because being does not admit division or separation. Nevertheless the subjectivity is not seen, and must therefore exist virtually in it. When the speculating human mind has known this necessary virtuality, it has, by means of it, known that the hidden form must exist, although the mind does not see it. Being therefore, in only one form, is sufficient for us to acknowledge simultaneously that a first is seen by the mind and that this first must subsist, although its subsistence is not actually seen. The reasoning that argues to this form begins with being, which is naturally infinite, and comes to understand how logically necessary is the actuality of that which appears only virtually. Hence, this reasoning does not take us out of being; our knowledge of it is simply increased; our thought simply begins from one form and argues to the other, which perfects the first, because objective being contains the reason for the other forms.

## CHAPTER 4

### The ontological nature of ideal being, and the ontological origin of human reasoning

1184. If we compare the abstracts perttainable to theosophical abstraction with absolute Being (even if known only by negative knowledge) we will find an order in them, which I call theosophical derivation. This order will unite them in human thought and not leave them separate and haphazard, as they have been up till now in ontological studies.<sup>5</sup> Because the bond uniting all these abstracts can be found only in absolute Being, which is perfectly one and simple, their different relationship to this Being is the principle of their order. However we cannot clearly explain this order without going some way back in our argument.

1185. What is ideal being?

Ideology cannot consider ideal being an abstract because it knows only *ascending abstraction*. It sees that we are so remote from forming ideal being with this abstraction that on the contrary every abstraction we make on our perceptions presupposes that *ideal being* stands before our mind as a means or instrument of abstraction. It sees that when abstraction brings us to ideal being, the abstraction is reflective not direct, that is, it does not itself form ideal being but finds it already formed, and simply extracts from the perception what the mind first posited in the act of perception.

Theosophy, however, rising to the conception of another abstraction made by God, not man, considers ideal being as a divine, theosophical abstract and sees that it does not have subjective subsistence, as I have said. Ideal being therefore has an *abstract nature*, and because the human mind does not give it this abstract nature, the mind must receive it fully formed by the Author of nature.

I have already discussed to some extent the nature of this divine abstract and shown how we can conceive its formation.

<sup>5</sup> A glance at Wolff's or Baldinotti's ontology shows how ontological notions are explained without indicating any connection between them.

Here however I must recall it so that we have the explanation clearly before us.

We have seen that Being in each of its forms is the whole of Being. We also saw how, as maximum container, it contains being in the other two forms, and that Being in the objective form is being known *per se*. This subsists because it contains Being in the first form which is subsistent subject-Being, and contains it as received and objectivised. Let us suppose there were a mind that took subsistent objective Being and abstracted from it the subsistent subject, which is being in the first form contained in objective Being. If the mind now sets aside the subsistent subject as if it were not, the only thing present to its thought would be objective being, without the subsistent subject contained in it; it would have before it nothing but empty objective being which would not contain being in the first form. But *objective being*, seen in this way by the mind, is precisely *ideal being*, empty of reality, capable of containing any reality whatsoever, and therefore undetermined, virtual. This is the ontological origin of the elementary concepts of *undetermined* and *virtual*. Ideal being is thus not a human, ideological abstract but a divine theosophical abstract.

*Ideal being* is objective Being separated by abstraction from its connection with subjective Being and considered or intuited on its own. It is being in one form only, that is, the objective form alone. This demonstrates that if being in one form is separated from being in the other two forms, it becomes something else, which is no longer absolute Being. The fact that the abstracting mind can carry out this separation internally by itself is the principle of the multiplication of entia.

But because there is everything in Being in each form, if the subject is abstracted from Being in the objective form, everything will still be there but lacking entirely the subsistent subject. Everything will certainly be there but will be empty and capable only of a subject, and not always a particular subject but any subject whatsoever among many conceivable subjects. Everything capable of a subject among various subjects is undetermined, as I said, and virtual. We see once again therefore that ideal being, that is, being without a subject, is 'the principle of indetermination and of the virtuality of the objects of thought'.

We can now understand the origin and ontological nature of



abstract objects. They result from the mind's faculty to consider something in a given ens independently of everything else and, relative to itself, separate that thing as if it were on its own, although the thing in effect is not separable, or even distinct in the ens in itself. This mental separation carried out by the mind's gaze is the cause of abstract objects.

1186. I have distinguished three forms of abstracts: the *common*, the *qualified substantive*, and the *pure abstract* (PSY, 2: 1461–1463). Although we use external words to express these abstracts in the order we need for communicating our thoughts to others, nevertheless, in the purely mental order, *pure abstracts* have a anteriority because they are the most simple. And when these are explained, common concepts and qualified substantives are supposed and explained without difficulty. All we need to find therefore is the explanation and ontological origin of pure abstracts.

We have seen how the mind has the faculty to separate out many natures in a simple ens, which in the ens are only virtually separate or distinct.<sup>6</sup> The mind does this through its ability to limit its gaze. Clearly therefore the operation, which in *Psychology* I called 'pure abstract', and the characteristic that determines the nature of this operation is 'the mental separation of the subject from the essence to which the subject pertains'. I can now complete this teaching about abstracts: I will continue to discuss separation, then bring together the different parts, and finally add what is lacking to the complete range of different abstractions.

1187. The separation made by the mind divides an ens into two parts. These parts constitute two supreme genera of abstracts: one is the *subject*, divided from the essence, the other the *essence*, divided from the subject.

<sup>6</sup> As I have noted, virtuality is twofold. It concerns perfection and imperfection. When something which passes from virtual being to actual being is more imperfect, its virtual mode is a perfection of the ens. Thus the *separation* of attributes exists virtually in God alone and is a perfection. On the other hand, when something which passes from virtual being to actual being is more perfect, its virtual mode is an imperfection of the ens or entity. Thus, being becomes a more perfect object of the mind when it makes actually appear to the mind the subject which, in its state as object of human intuition, it hides from the mind.

The mental division of subject from essence can vary in extent, which explains the different degrees of abstraction made on the subject.

For example, if we separate any essence at all from its *subject*, we have a *maximum abstraction* relative to the subject and also the concept of a most universal, most abstract *subject*. If on the other hand we say, 'body, spirit, etc.', we still have an abstract subject (a generic subject, etc.) but not the most universal subject, because the subject is divided only from the generic or specific essence of bodies, not from the essence of corporeity or spirituality.

Such subjects, except the most abstract, are precisely *qualified substantives*. Properly speaking, what is most abstract cannot be called qualified, unless the absence of all qualification is itself understood as a quality.

When essence is divided from the subject, it has no gradation. Granted that it is divided and is thus abstract, it is divided totally from the subject. But other abstractions can be made on the essence itself: in an essence abstracted from its subject the abstracting mind can find other things to be abstracted and considered separately. The result is a series, indeed many series, of essences, all abstracted from the subject.

1188. This abstracting faculty of the mind is not contained in the pure concept of mind but in the concept of the power of the will over the mind's thoughts. Hence, in the previous book, I said that divine abstraction pertains to the free, not the necessary, operation of God, although this freedom is a necessary faculty in God.

This free thought, from which abstract objects come, is a power exercised by the intelligent subject on its objects. It is not a power to modify them in so far as they exist in themselves but in so far as they have become cognitions of the mind.

Although an ens is in itself indivisible, free thought can divide it and distinguish many things in it, even though *in se* it admits no distinctions. Hence, we should not be surprised that free thought can also unite abstracts as it likes, because they are in the power of free thought. This union, precisely because free, can be formed correctly or wrongly. It is formed correctly if the free union restores to the object in itself what had been separated from it or was seen as separated in any way

whatsoever. But it is formed wrongly if the free conjunction is carried out contrary to what is in the object as such. The mind therefore has two objects or, expressed another way, the same object is conceived in two modes and by two different powers: the mind, as a necessary power, conceives the object in itself; as a free power, it conceives the object in the way the mind makes it. The first is truth and, relative to the second object, is the *criterion* of this object. The second is true when it agrees with the first, and false when it does not. This is the ontological explanation of error.

1189. We have seen that intelligence has these two powers and two objects. This gave us the ontological explanation of dialectics, because we understand how thought in its reasoning proceeds by means of propositions composed of subjects, predicates and copulas. In any proposition whatsoever, including propositions in the singular, the subject and predicate are two abstracts. For example, when we say: 'Paul is healthy', the predicate 'healthy' has been separated from the subject 'Paul', and the proposition reunites it with him. It is true that 'Paul' means *per se* alone a real subject (granted he is a living person) and therefore does not mean an abstract. But in the proposition, 'Paul' takes the place of an abstract, although at the lowest level of abstraction. To be aware of this, we must prescind from everything we know about Paul, independently of the proposition, and accept that the proposition is spoken to someone who does not know Paul. This person, upon hearing the first word of the proposition, understands the word 'Paul' to mean simply some determined human being, a vague individual, about whom he knows nothing. But when he has understood the whole proposition, he can, with his thought, add health to the vague individual called Paul. In the proposition therefore, 'Paul' has the meaning of an abstract, and 'healthy' has even more the condition of an abstract. But what about the copula 'is'? This word in itself expresses the *act* without the subject, which is its principle, and without the essence, which is its term (cf. *Logica*, 334). It also is therefore an abstract, the *abstract act*, pronounced not in so far as seen done but in so far as done. This manner of pronouncing the abstract act, called 'affirmation', does not pertain to the object but to the subject who appropriates the cognition to himself. Hence, 'is' does not express the

objective cognition but the act of the knowing subject who appropriates the cognition to himself when he affirms it. If the intelligent subject's act, indicated by 'is', is removed, only the subject's own act remains. This act, lying between the subject and the essence, is therefore a *mediate abstract*, which constitutes a third genus.

If this *act*, divided from every subject and predicate, is considered by the mind, it is an abstract, as I have said. But because God, with the creative act, realises his abstracts, this realised act is the real being of all the entia composing the universe, as we saw in the previous book; it is actuating, initial being. In its realisation, it finds the subject in finite reality, not because it is an act of this subject in the sense that the subject is first and the act comes from the subject, but in the sense that the subject receives the act. Therefore the act, under different aspects, is first and last: it is first as cause-act of the subject, last because this cause-act, after giving existence to the real subject, does not abandon it but becomes its last determination.

Thus, the analysis of a subsistent ens shows three elements. These elements, considered by themselves, are three abstracts which constitute the three supreme genera of the abstracts resulting from the division of an ens. All these abstracts are either 1. an abstract subject, or 2. an abstract act, or 3. an abstract quality. This analysis is faithfully represented in a *proposition*, as well as in all human speech made up of propositions. And the different levels of abstraction are the origin of syllogism.

These different levels of abstraction are found only in the subject and predicate because the copula of the proposition always reduces to the act of being, which can be expressed by the monosyllable 'is' (cf. *Logica*, 427). Syllogism originates therefore from the different levels of abstraction in which the subject and predicate can be conceived. Consequently, all syllogisms reduce to two supreme genera: extension and inclusion (cf. *Logica*, 577–589). *Syllogisms of extension* have their foundation in the different levels of abstraction at which the subject is conceived. Their principle is: 'The characteristics, that is, the predicates which fit a subject of greater extension, that is, a subject that has a higher level of abstraction, fit equally the same subject given less extension, that is, is less abstract', or 'The less abstract subject is contained in the more abstract subject.' *Syllogisms of*

*inclusion* have their foundation in the different levels of the predicate's extension. Their principle is: 'If a predicate of greater inclusion, that is, less abstract, fits a subject, the same predicate of less inclusion, that is, more abstract, also fits the subject', or 'A more abstract predicate is contained in a less abstract predicate.'

1190. We have here therefore the ontological explanation and origin of all human reasoning. We also see that the great work of abstraction is founded entirely on the separation applied by the free mind to the ens it conceives when it separates the subject from the rest of the ens. This separation can be made 1. by the free intelligence of God, which explains how the first light given to the human mind is an *abstract* not made by the human being himself, and 2. by free human intelligence, which, as I said, explains the whole of human dialectics.

Just as entia are two: infinite and finite, so subjects are two: absolute, which is subsistent Being itself, and relative, which is pure real form. Similarly, abstractions are two: common and theosophical. Divine abstraction can also be called theosophical, but it differs essentially from human abstraction in this: while God with his free thought carries out abstraction upon himself, he carries it out on an object fully known by him, indeed generated by him. For us humans however, the only object on which we carry out any abstraction is an object we know very imperfectly through logical relationships of a negative knowledge.

These two genera of abstractions provide a first division of abstracts into two supreme classes, a division known to Plato (cf. *Del divino nella natura*): 1. abstractions whose foundation is absolute Being, and 2. abstractions whose foundation is re-lative, finite entia. And to these we must add a third class: the properties common to every genus of abstracts, like *indetermination* and *virtuality*.

## CHAPTER 5

### The ontological limitation of human knowledge

1191. Before describing more precisely the order of abstract concepts, I must indicate some causes of the imperfection of our human reasoning that produces the abstracts to be classified.

The first cause is certainly this: human reasoning begins from a first abstract given by God as light.

The first step therefore that human thought must take has to be a synthesis. With this synthesis it completes in some way the abstract it naturally knows. This is what happens in perception.

1192. The elements of this synthesis are feeling and abstract being.

Abstract being is the essential intelligibility of all feelings and of everything in feeling, in other words, of all reality. But as long as abstract being is known only in abstract, no feeling is known in it; feeling is only virtually present in it. When however anyone who intuits being as absolute intelligibility is a feeling or acquires a feeling, everything felt becomes intelligible, because the intelligibility of what he feels was already in him — the only thing lacking was the term to which to refer the intelligibility.

Moreover, granted that anyone who intuits abstract, intelligible being is or has a feeling, this feeling naturally has an order; there is in it a first which contains the rest, and consequently a unity. Hence it cannot lack what is included in the definition of a subject because ‘the subject is what is conceived as first, as container and cause of unity’. If there is a first feeling that has no other prior feeling containing it, but itself contains and unifies other partial feelings, it becomes a subject as soon as it is understood. Thus human thought unites a felt reality as subject to the being it intuits.

However, it is one thing that the feeling-as-subject is intelligible in objective being, which is absolute intelligibility, and another that it is affirmed as existing. The feeling-as-subject, as purely intelligible, is simply something possible known in a determined way. As such there can be no difficulty in our

intuiting it in being which is absolute intelligibility and virtually contains all intelligible things.

But it is not only *intuited* as possible but is *affirmed* to be subsistent. Both these things are performed with one operation, called perception. The operation is one because it is an operation of one human subject who performs it by making two powers act simultaneously in harmony; these powers are intuition and affirmation. Hence we can say that relative to them there are two operations which when united produce perception. Granted a feeling, we simultaneously *intuit* in being the intelligibility of this feeling, that is, its possibility, and *affirm* its existence. By this operation, we add to the *cognition persuasion* about the subsistence, and this is called a *second cognition* (cf. *Logica*, 328–336).

If we consider the *intuition* of this feeling, which is the first elementary operation of perception, it is seen to consist totally in regarding the feeling as *object-being* (idea of the feeling). In the second operation, the affirmation, we see that we apply to the feeling the *subjective being* contained in the object we intuit and we predicate this being of the object. As I have observed, subjective being is implicitly contained in object-being. But when being before the mind has received some determination, when a possible feeling is intuited in it, a subject already begins to reveal itself actually in the object, because possible feeling is or has within itself a possible subject. Thus, at the moment that objective being presents a possible feeling to the mind, together with this it presents a possible subject, and in this way being is revealed in a subjective form. The mind can now predicate subjective being of the feeling and affirm it.

In perception therefore, a subject as contained in the objective form is added to abstract objective being as container. The contained subject is then extracted from the objective form and applied and predicated of the feeling. As we saw, the mind has the faculty to divide the object and consider separately both it and what it contains.

1193. Feeling seen in the objective form refers to real feeling. But real feeling cannot be conceived as existing unless it is given subjective being. Given this, it can be conceived subsistent with its own subsistence separate from that of objective being. When this is the case, feeling seen in the real form must also make

known the possibility of some subsistent thing with its own subsistence separate from that of objective being. Hence, the subject added to objective being is not subjective being but simply a subject which, although certainly known in objective being, is known to be possible of subsistence outside objective being, separate from the subject which is subsistent being. For this reason, there is always a duality in our knowledge of finite things: being and the finite form (which can never be identified with being). If being subsists, it must subsist *per se* and not through the action of a mind. The finite form however, if it subsists, must on the contrary subsist through the action of a mind; the mind applies to it subjective being which the mind possesses contained in objective being. It does this by the ability it has to separate and unite the objects under its control.

But, as we have seen, human and divine minds do this in different ways. The divine mind, which is the divine essence itself, has itself as *necessary object*, that is, absolute being. By splitting and dividing this necessary object, the divine mind freely abstracts from it other objects which are not *necessary being* as such (which is indivisible) but the finite objects which compose the world. In the most wise abstraction of these objects, the divine mind not only intuits them but pronounces and affirms them, and because this pronouncement and affirmation is pronounced and affirmed of being and is therefore itself being, the objects, that is, the subjects contained in them, must also subsist. However, they subsist not with the subsistence of absolute being (because they are not such being) but with their own subsistence received by the act of the divine mind, a subsistence relative to themselves. The human mind must proceed in the opposite direction; as one of the finite entia created by God, as described above, it has naturally only *objective being* devoid of all actual subjectivity. In this being, it cannot know any subject if nothing else is given it. But it is given feeling, which is one of the subjects that God had extracted from the objective form which these subjects had in the objects formed by abstraction by the divine mind. The human mind sees in *objective being* the intelligibility or idea of this feeling as subject, and because it knows the feeling as subject in objective being, it extracts from it the subjectivity of being which it predicates of the feeling, and thus makes the subjectivity subsist relative to the mind. But the



human mind is aware that it necessarily, not freely, predicates subjective being of the feeling. The predication is necessary because the feeling is given to the mind; the mind does not produce it with its predication but knows it solely through this predication. Hence, there is always an obscure element in the mind's perceptive knowledge: it does not see how it is given the feeling, being aware that it does not give the feeling to itself. Let us examine this obscure element.

1194. A finite feeling is necessarily the term of the infinite subject as free agent. Because subjective Being together with all its actuality (both necessary and free actuality) and the terms of this actuality are contained in subsistent, objective Being, finite real entities are also contained in the same subsistent, objective Being, although this containment is not relative to them but to God. Hence they also, according to their absolute existence, are in this subsistent, objective Being but they are there as terms of freely acting subjective Being, which itself remains totally hidden from human intuition. When therefore human thought unites finite real entities with being (in perception), they are united to it in such a way that the link between them and being remains hidden; this link is subjective Being which creates them, and by virtue of it they subsist. Because of this lacuna, there is an imperfection, a disconnection between being, intuited by us, and finite real entities. It is precisely here that the obscure element I mentioned has its origin. Nevertheless, although finite real entities are contained in objective being, they can, when felt, be known in this being because they are in objective being; however, the lacuna is also present with them. But because they are not necessarily contained in objective being, the lacuna prevents our seeing how they are there and where they come from. Consequently, when real entities are sensible to anyone who has the intuition of being, they are certainly manifested in being, but as separate entities. Despite this, the subject-Being to which they are joined through creation and which keeps them existing in objective Being, where the subject-Being is, is never seen.

Such is the ontological limitation and imperfection of human knowledge.

## CHAPTER 6

### Abstracts

1195. Abstracts contain 1. an element coming from the object on which the abstraction is made, 2. an element coming from the laws of abstracting thought, and 3. an arbitrary element.

Abstraction is an operation carried out by the mind on any object in its power, that is, on the object as known to the mind and not as existing in itself.

The first object of abstraction is a complete ens.

The intention and effect of this mental operation is to divide the object so that a part of it can be considered separately without consideration of the rest.

Although, in God, this operation pertains to free intelligence, it is not arbitrary, and much less arbitrary in us. Our mind, when making an abstraction, can do nothing contrary to the nature of the ens which is the mind's object. Hence, the very nature of being imposes certain laws on abstraction (cf. *NE*, 3: 1454–1455). In all abstracts therefore there is something pertaining to the ens on which the abstraction was made, and something posited by the mind itself in its abstracting operation. This thing that the mind produces in abstracts contains an element dependent on the immutable nature of abstracting thought.

If this were not the case, a classification of abstracts would be impossible. If abstracts were produced arbitrarily, free of laws, which would be a cause similar to what is understood as 'chance', they would have no order.

## CHAPTER 7

### The two supreme genera of abstracts extracted from an ens when it is not broken down into its parts

1196. A complete ens can be divided by the mind in two ways: by breaking it down into its elements, each of which remains undetermined, or by considering the ens in the abstract, that is, composed of its elements kept in a state of indetermination. Hence, to the series of abstracts resulting from the breaking down of an ens we must add another series in which the mind thinks the ens with all its elements but leaves these undetermined.

We have in fact distinguished three elements in an ens when it is an object of the mind: the subject, the act and the terminative essence. But an ens can also be thought as a whole, composed of these three elements, although all three elements are left undetermined, that is, neither the subject nor the object nor the terminative essence are determined. This is an *abstract ens*, containing virtually and without distinction the three undetermined elements.

Moreover we can also think of an ens that results from its three, perfectly determined elements. These elements however can be determined in diverse *ways*. If the way itself of determining the ens remains indefinite or undetermined, we have another abstract, called 'vague individual'. The mind thinks the entire ens in the vague individual and thinks it entirely determined but does not actually think *in what way it is determined*. It ignores the way but does not deny it; in other words, it includes it virtually but not actually in the thought ens.

A dual virtuality can therefore be present in an ens as an object of thought: a *virtuality of determination* and a *virtuality of the way in which it is determined*. Indeed determination as a concept is itself an abstract, expressing no particular determination. Hence, when determination is attributed to an ens, an abstract quality common to possible diverse determinations is also attributed.

Note however that the vague individual is not a perfect

abstract — it contains something determined. It is an object of thought lying between the ens thought as subsistent and the abstract ens. Consequently, it can be considered an abstract of a lower kind, below that of the ens. Nevertheless it deserves consideration because it has a *form* of abstraction *proper* to it.

*Common ens* and *vague individual* are thus the first two abstracts drawn from an ens recomposed with its undetermined elements. The elements are distinguished only virtually, not actually, in the object of the mind.

But because, as we have seen, abstract forms are under the control of the mind, the mind can vest the above two abstract concepts of an ens with the form of the three partial abstracts and consider each as subject, act and terminative essence.

1197. We have therefore eight forms of abstracts:

- A. I. ens in all its universality
- II. ens considered as subject
- III. ens considered as act
- IV. ens considered as terminative essence, *entity*
- B. V. vague individual
- VI. vague individual considered as subject
- VII. vague individual considered as act
- VIII. vague individual considered as terminative essence, *individuality*.

*Ens in all its universality* is an abstract form which the mind can apply to any object of thought. The same cannot be said exactly about the vague individual, which supposes an ens to be determined and determined in diverse ways. There are abstracts whose simplicity excludes many ways of being determined. Hence, they cannot be considered vague individuals, not even by a supposition of the mind.

*Ens in all its universality* has therefore the condition of a *maximum container* because thought can consider everything as an ens. *Vague individual*, however, is not a maximum container because it is not an abstract taken to the ultimate degree of perfection; it does not contain those objects of thought that lack many manners of determination.

## CHAPTER 8

### The three supreme genera of abstracts that result when an ens is broken down into its parts

#### Article 1

Aristotle did not attain the true classification of abstracts

1198. As we have seen, two abstracts can be extracted from a whole ens, and its elements left solely in the state of virtuality relative to the mind. To these two must be added the three genera of abstracts I extracted from an ens when broken down into its three elements of subject, act and terminative essence. Thus, in total we have five supreme genera of abstracts.

Aristotle neither deduced them nor united them in a well-ordered scheme. In his categories he classified only predicates, as the word 'category' itself indicates, and this classification of predicates was itself imperfect (cf. *Logica*, 413, 418). Predicates are only the fifth supreme genus of abstracts, of the type 'terminative essence, or quality'.<sup>7</sup> If this were all he intended, he cannot be censured for omitting the other genera; an author does not deserve to be censured for not doing what he did not wish to do. However, Aristotle cannot escape another censure.

If he wanted to classify only the fifth genus of abstracts, he should not have included the subsistent subject in the classification. But he does in fact include it in the presentation of the first category. It cannot pertain to abstracts unless conceived as a 'vague individual', which is the fourth genus. To come to this confusion of concepts, he had to assign two meanings to the same word, *οὐσία*, which is his first category. But if this word means two different things (as he intends), his categories are eleven, not ten. In fact, he distinguishes between first and second essences, defining the first as those which 'are not said of some subject nor are in a subject, like a particular human being or horse'.<sup>8</sup> If they are not used about any subject, they are excluded from the categories, that is, from the predicates. In any

<sup>7</sup> Aristotle gives the name 'substantial quality' to generic and specific substance, which is predicated of a subject, (*Cat.*, 5).

<sup>8</sup> *Cat.*, 5.

case, why this negative definition of οὐσία in the first meaning? Does it not simply mean that essence, understood in this way, is the subsistent subject which, precisely because it itself is subject, is not said about a subject and is not in another subject? He confuses the subject with the essence that is predicated of the subject and which alone can be called category.

Here another defect becomes apparent. Οὐσία or essence clearly has the abstract form pertaining to the fifth genus and not to the form of ens (first genus) or of subject (third genus). Because essence means 'that which a thing is', it does not contain, as I have said, the concept of ens or of subject or of its act; it contains only a relationship with a possible subject, from which it is abstracted and of which it can be predicated ([cf. 228]).

1199. This practice of using 'essence' to indicate a subsistent ens is common in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle certainly took it from the school of his master, but in his system it became an unforgivable abuse, which it was not in Plato's system. The cause of such reasoning was the following. Plato was aware that essences are changeable and outside this world. It is true that he reduced them all to *essence per se*, which is purely essence and not the essence of this or that thing. When he had come to the concept of this first essence, he could not fail to note that such essence was identical with its subject. In my opinion, he noted this in the logical order where *being*, if understood as subject, becomes identical to its essence ([cf. 231–232]). But when, in this logical order, being is understood as subject, the subject in question is dialectical, not real. Here therefore, our mind can exchange at will the two forms of being and essence because being is truly essence, and the mind can dialectically change it into a subject. But this is not the case with subsistent being, which is in effect a *subject*. Hence the word 'essence' (understood in its abstract form) does not exactly fit subsistent being except in an imperfect manner of speaking to indicate its infinity. Thus, with Plato, we can say that God is *essence* in place of saying that he is subject-Being. But Aristotle changed the system; instead of reducing essences in God, he brought them back into the world and dispersed them throughout nature with the result that Platonic language was no longer suitable. Because Aristotle imprudently retained his master's use of the word 'essence' (that is, essence was God himself,

subsistent subject), he extended the word to mean all the subsistent subjects in nature. He thus debased and confused language: a particular word which in some way could apply only to God (this was Plato's use of it) was applied by Aristotle to finite entia whose subject is absolutely distinct from essence.

## Article 2

The four abstracts that are most universal predicables of every entity, and of each other.

1200. We know what a *total abstract* is; it is the abstract ens — I leave aside the *vague individual*, which is a form of imperfect abstraction that can be subordinated to the abstract ens. We also know the three supreme genera of partial abstracts: *subject*, *act* and *quality* or terminative essence. However, before we investigate the subordinate classes into which each of these abstracts is distinguished, we must consider not only what they retain of the ens, the object on which abstraction is carried out, but also what the mind, when abstracting, posits in them. This will give us their absolute extension.

The first genus, we must note, is presented to the abstracting power by the total ens; the other three genera, by the constitution of the ens. The only thing that thought contributes is the *separation*, which can therefore cause the object to lose its identity and can originate other mental entities.

We must also keep in mind that the object as known is under the command of the abstracting faculty. If it were not, abstraction would be inexplicable because it would not divide what in itself is united. If the abstracting faculty divides the object that, in its own existence, is united, it can also re-unite the divided parts as it likes. Consequently, the four abstracts I have spoken about, which are very generic indeed, can be used by the mind as movable forms that it can apply as it pleases, and hence apply them rightly or wrongly to everything it thinks; the four abstracts can therefore be most universal predicables. The mind also can give the form of one abstract to another, and through this application or conjunction of the form transform them.

1201. Moreover, in the case of the *abstract ens*, the mind can not only endow the other three abstracts with this form but

must do so if it wants to conceive them separately. It cannot conceive anything unless what it conceives is conceived as ens; to conceive and to understand are simply to apprehend an ens (cf. *NE*, 2: 559–560). The mind can equally apply the form of *act* to the subject, in which case the subject is included in the genus of acts. It can apply the same form of act to a quality or an essence, where again this becomes a part of the genus of acts. Thus, when Aristotle laid down the ten categories — which are simply partial abstracts of the third genus, that is, predicable essences or qualities — he teaches that each can be in *act* or in *potency*. He fails to see that in saying this he is adding another abstract form to his categories. In fact, [if] each category is an entirely simple concept, how does it become twofold? This twofold state cannot be explained without the mind sometimes making and sometimes not making an addition to the categories. Aristotle could in fact have seen this because he maintained, against the Platonists, that universals are essences in potency, not in act. They cannot be in act unless the mind adds this act either by applying the form of act to them or by restoring to them the act and the subject that was removed by abstraction. But because such a synthesis is the opposite of abstraction, they are no longer simply essences.

Vice versa, the form of subject can be applied to the other two abstracts, that is, to act and to quality or nature, as in the following propositions: ‘Act has greater perfection than potency’, ‘Quality is of many kinds.’ Here, act and quality are subjects, because the mind has given them the form of subject. This is the origin of *dialectical subjects* (cf. *Logica*, 419–424).

Finally, the form of quality or essence can be applied by the mind to the other two genera of abstracts in such a way that the abstracts appear as abstracts of the third genus. Thus, if the form is applied to the subject, the subject takes the form of *subjectivity*, which expresses the essence or quality of subject; if it is applied to act, it takes the form of *actuality*, which expresses the essence or quality of act.

1202. A doubt now arises concerning the concept expressed by the word ‘subjectivity’: ‘Essence does not have in itself the subject but refers to a subject that can be of any kind. To which subject therefore does subjectivity, as the essence of a subject, refer?’ My answer is that the human mind distinguishes



subjectivity from the subject by the faculty it has to divide an ens into the three generic abstracts. It can make three forms of these and vest anything that is not a subject with the abstract form of subject, and in this way form dialectical subjects. Because there are two kinds of subject for the human mind — one which is such in itself and present to the mind, the other which is such through the mind alone (the dialectical subject) — the mind applies or predicates subjectivity as a common form or essence to the one it prefers. This is evident in the distinction made by the abstracting mind between being and its forms. *Subjectivity* is one of the forms of being, abstracted from being and predicated of being by the mind. Being, divided in this way from the subjective form, is not as such subject but pure essence. But the abstracting mind, in command of its abstracts, takes being as a *dialectical subject* and speaks of the subjectivity of being. The same analysis can be applied to the expression, ‘the subjectivity of this ens’. The mind considers this ens as a synthesis of the three abstract elements, *subject*, *act* and *essence*. Hence, ‘the subjectivity of this ens’ means the ens is taken as subject. Here however the ens is understood as a dialectical subject because, in addition to the element of subject, it contains within itself the other two elements which are not subject. The pure form of subject is given to all three united in this way, and what is subject in itself is predicated of this dialectical subject. In short, the mind can predicate the form of subjectivity both of what is a subject in itself and of what is not a subject in itself and is therefore distinguished from the subject (whatever this may be) of which it is predicated. Vice versa, an ens can itself be considered as a subject or as an act or as essence, in the way I have explained.

### Article 3

The free mind’s<sup>9</sup> faculty for vesting abstracts with abstract forms is the principle of the vast multiplication of abstracts

1203. We see therefore how each of the three supreme genera of partial abstracts can contain the other two, giving them its

<sup>9</sup> As is clear from what has been said, by ‘free mind’ I mean the mind as not bound by the object *in se* but able to modify its own object without the object *in se* undergoing any modification.

own form. Hence, because each can be considered individually and applied to the other two, we have *nine* generic abstracts:

1. SUBJECT, pure abstract
2. subject act (first dialectic)
3. subject essence (second dialectic)
4. ACT, abstract
5. act subject
6. act essence
7. ESSENCE, pure abstract
8. subjectivity
9. actuality

If we consider that each of these can be vested with the form of ens, they become eighteen, and if to these we add the eight forms mentioned earlier which abstract ens takes, they become twenty-six.

The primal abstracts that serve as types for the others are therefore few, and the abstracts that originate in ens *in se* and in its constitution are supreme. But because our mind has the faculty to vest each with the form of the others, the few primal abstracts multiply from these endowments and give new, complex forms of abstracts that are composite, not simple. In turn these composite abstracts (I mean the most universal) constitute other types and genera of abstracts.

#### Article 4

The four maximum abstracts, predicates and predicables compared

1204. What then is the difference between the four maximum abstracts, predicates and predicables?

*Predicables* are simply *predicates of predicates* (*Logica*, 414–416). They are reflexive predicates that characterise direct predicates, according to their extension and what they include. They are therefore distributed in two series: in one series they are distributed according to the extension of their concepts; in the other, according to what the concepts themselves include.

*Predicates* are therefore predicates abstracted from predicates.<sup>10</sup> But the abstraction made on predicates is done on only

<sup>10</sup> The name ‘predicable’ is fitting because the seven reflexive predicates, abstracted from the predicates, indicate the *seven ways* in which the direct

one element of an ens, not on the complete ens. In fact, a *predicate* expresses only the *terminative essence*, or whatever it expresses it certainly does so under the form of *terminative essence*. All predicates therefore, and thus also all predicables, which reduce predicates to seven classes, are simply a subdivision of the fourth genus of abstracts, which I have called quality or terminative essence. To see the position that predicables hold in the scheme of abstracts, we need to place them as follows:

I. abstract ENS

II. SUBJECT

III. ACT

IV. TERMINATIVE ESSENCE. If this is divided according to the extension of ideas and what they include, it gives seven *predicables*:

Predicables	{	Most universal essence
		Generic essence
		Specific essence
		Differential essence
		Integral essence <sup>11</sup>
		Accidental essence
		Real essence

1205. Someone may object that the three first abstracts, 'ens, subject and act', must also be classed with the predicates, that they are in fact predicated.

This objection requires a careful solution. We can consider a predicate in two ways, either as already applied to a subject but distinct from it, or as entirely separate from the subject but able to be applied to it. Therefore every predicate has two forms which we can call *form of union* and *form of separation of the predicate*. The first three maximum abstracts (the abstract ens,

predicates can be predicated of various subjects. For example, *quantity*, as I noted in *Logica*, 413, can be predicated of various subjects as a genus, as a species, as a difference, etc., because the extension of the predicate and what it includes, relative to the subject to which the predicate is applied, can vary. As a result, there are ten dialectical predications (*Logica*, 405–413).

<sup>11</sup> In *Logica*, instead of 'integral essence' I kept 'what is proper' of Aristotle and of all logicians, but it would be better to use 'integral essence', which divides into *common* and *proper*. For example, our having two arms and two legs does not pertain to the *specific essence*; it is common to anthropomorphic animals. That we smile does not pertain to our specific essence but is a consequence of this and is *proper* only to human beings.

subject and act) have the *form of union*; the fourth maximum abstract, the *terminative essence*, has the *form of separation*.

All predicates can be vested with these two forms so that they are indifferent to their listing or classification as one form or the other; the double nature of the form does not increase the number of predicates or predicables. Hence, when I listed seven predicables in Logic, I put the first three under the form of separation and the other four (difference, what is proper, what is accidental, what is real) under the form of union, which I then ignored.

But when we want to list and reduce abstracts to the supreme classes, the matter is no longer indifferent and negligible. Abstracts are named according to the operation of abstraction and are its direct product. This operation of abstraction results in the first three maximum abstracts in the *form of union*; only the fourth results in the *form of separation*. In this second form the abstract can be predicated but is not yet predicated. If we wish to retain complete propriety, we would have to call it *predicable* and reserve *predicate* for the form of union proper to the first three.

But, as I said, this distinction does not help in listing predicates. On the contrary, when we are talking about predicates in all their universality, they are not considered united in any way to a subject but as separate and solely predicable because it is more fitting that predicates are vested with the type presented by the terminative essence. As I said, their listing and classification still remains complete, because all predicates can equally receive this essence.

1206. On the other hand we need to see why part of the maximum abstracts appear as predicates under the form of union, and part as predicates under the form of separation. An abstract certainly has a form of its own, but it can vest this form with another abstract supplied by the mind. In my opinion, the first three abstracts have the form of predicates of union as their proper form, but the mind can vest them with the forms of predicates of separation. The fourth maximum abstract is on the contrary given by abstraction under the form of predicate of separation, for the following reason. The *form of union* is that in which the mind considers a predicate in union with its subject, although it distinguishes it from the subject. But in the first three maximum

abstracts the abstracting mind does not divide the predicate from the subject, because the subject, even though abstract, remains in the abstract ens, and also in the abstract subject. Moreover, the act, which is an abstract lying between the subject and the terminative essence, certainly differs in concept from the concept of the subject but is inseparable from the subject; it could in fact *be* the subject because the subject is 'that which in an ens is first and container and cause of unity'. All this is verified in the first act of an ens. Consequently, although the concept of act, when act is understood in all its universality, differs from the concept of subject, it is not separable from the subject.

The first three abstracts therefore have in their nature and origin 'the form of predicates of union'. If they are then vested with the form of separation and are called 'entity, subjectivity, actuality', this is a dialectical operation that is far removed from the nature of things, although it returns to them through synthesis. Hence, only analytical judgments are made with these three abstracts, because to predicate entity, subjectivity and actuality of an ens is simply to predicate itself of itself, to predicate itself vested with another form, vested with itself in its own form. This aids the discursive process of the human mind, which needs movement.

A consequence of this is that the first three maximum abstracts are not predicates when considered purely as abstracts, that is, as direct products of abstraction: only later do they become predicates, in the following way. First, the mind reduces them to the type 'terminative essence', and when reduced, predicates them. Through this act of predication they become predicates in the form of union (common nouns). But because this predication gives them the form and the name they had as abstracts (predicating themselves of themselves), they are called 'predicates in the form of union'. However, in their origin and as pure abstracts they are not truly such but become so only later through the two mental operations which 1. vest them with the fourth abstract and 2. predicate them.

#### Article 5

The four abstracts are maximum containers

1207. From what has been said we see that the four abstracts,

[1207]

as abstracts, are *maximum* containers. Indeed, because each can be vested by the mind with the form of one of the others, by virtue of this vesting each contains not only the genera and species of the abstracts below it but the abstracts of the other three genera and all the classes below them.

Aristotle did not accurately observe this reciprocal containership. If he had classified only predicates in his categories, he could not have been reproached for forgetting the first three forms of abstracts. But he did not see that the classification of *predicates* is a different problem from that of the classification of *abstracts*. His ten categories were not only a classification of predicates but simultaneously a classification of abstracts, and he declared the latter to be a table of *universals*. But because his categories have the type 'essence', they are simply an imperfect classification of the abstracts of the fourth genus. Although the other three genera are contained in the fourth, he failed to see that they are there with a form that is not their own, and that three other primal forms must be taken into account when abstracts are being classified, precisely because these three primal forms give other types of abstraction.

### Article 6

Comparison between the forms of being and the four supreme genera of abstracts, when both the forms and the supreme genera are considered as maximum containers

1208. In the order of abstractions, the four supreme genera of abstracts are *maximum containers*. The three primal forms of Being are also absolutely *maximum containers*. What is the relationship between these two kinds of maximum container?

First of all, Being in its three forms is identical *ens*. In each of its forms it is an absolutely maximum container so that it includes every entity and also itself reciprocally in the other two forms. The three supreme abstracts (subject, act and terminative essence) are maximum containers of only abstract entities, and each abstract genus contains reciprocally the other two genera.

The other supreme abstract, *ens*, is purely the union of the subject, act and terminative essence in its state of abstraction.

Hence, it also is a maximum container of abstract entities and of the first three abstracts, in so far as the mind can vest every entity with the form of ens.

1209. But doesn't *abstract ens* also contain *subsistent Ens*?

According to the imperfect thinking of our mind, we can say 'Yes', but our mind sees that this is purely an imperfect way of conceiving, and that subsistent Ens *in se* and abstract ens cannot have the relationship of *contained* and *container*, because in subsistent Ens there is everything that is in abstract ens, minus abstraction; in other words, there is more. The contrary therefore is more true: abstract ens is virtually contained in subsistent Ens, and not vice versa. The reason why we see the opposite is that our mind conceives abstract ens as object, and subsistent Ens only as subject. It is of course true that the subjective form is contained in the objective form, but if we take abstract ens independently of the three forms, the illusion disappears because we know instead that subsistent Ens is inseparable from the three forms, and therefore is not only subjective, but also maximum object.

1210. We come now to the three partial abstracts.

In subsistent Being with the three forms the human mind conceives a *subject*, an *act* and a *terminative essence*. The separation or actual distinction of these three things is not in absolute Being; our mind, with its abstracting faculty, posits the separation there, not in Being as such but as known by our mind, and therefore under the mind's control. As a result, the mind has caused its object to lose identity. The subject, the act and the terminative essence, each considered separately, are no longer absolute Being — they are three abstract *mental* objects, non-existent *in se*.

Clearly, the simple distinction that the mind makes, in absolute Being, of the three elements does not give us the subject, the act and the terminative form of maximum abstraction — it gives only the first subject, the first act and the first terminative form. Hence the three forms of abstracts I have discussed are not free of all other determinations; they can in fact be extracted by another abstraction: in the *first subject*, the form of subject can be separated from what makes it first among subjects; in the *first act*, the form of act can be separated from what makes it first among acts; and in the *first terminative form* the form of

terminative essence can be separated from what makes it first among terminative forms.

The form of subject is the possibility of any subsistent subject whatsoever; the form of act, the possibility of any act whatsoever, and the form of terminative essence, the possibility of a subsistent terminative essence. But the first subject is the first of the subjects that subsist; it is the entity in which the mind understands that the form of subject is actuated prior to its presence in any other entity. The first act is the first of the acts that subsist, that is, the entity in which the mind understands that the form of act is actuated before it is in any other entity. The first terminative essence is the first terminative essence that subsists, that is, the first entity in which the mind understands that the form of terminative essence is, before it is in any other entity. These three forms are in the mind, not outside it.

Because the three forms of abstracts are three possibilities, the mind knows neither a subsistent subject, nor a subsistent act nor a subsistent terminative essence, but understands they must be, because the possible cannot exist without the subsistent. Hence, the subsistent is *virtually* included in the concept of possibility; the necessity of the subsistent is seen in the possibility, even if the subsistent itself is not seen or directly and actually known. If there must be some subsistents, there must be the first subsistent among them. This is a new form of the demonstration of the existence of God *a priori*.

Granted therefore that the mind finds a subsistent by means of this *a priori* argument, it first understands that this subsistent must have 'all the conditions of subsistence'. When the mind examines these conditions, it finds that that there must be subject, act and terminative essence in the subsistent. All these three elements are not united in their possibility (which would give only an *abstract ens*), but in their reality and perfection; their union is precisely the condition of subsistence. With this *a priori* synthesis the mind reconstructs the ens it had dismantled by an *a posteriori* abstraction. I say *a posteriori* because the mind carries out the abstraction solely on a complete ens previously known to it; it does not produce the abstract ens or the three abstract forms in any other way — unless of course they are communicated to it as already produced by God.



1211. What is necessarily subsistent therefore is *virtually* contained in abstracts as the term of thought.

The concept of the subsistent also contains its conditions, which are three: the mind must be able to discern in it the subject, the act and the terminative essence.

This second virtuality is virtuality of the virtual; I call it simply 'second virtuality'.

Consequently, each of the three forms of abstracts implies the other two, through a second virtuality, that is, if the mind has one of the three forms of abstracts, it finds in this form a base, a reason, for arguing to the other two. However, it must be given the occasion that moves it to this process, and this occasion is the perceptions of subsistent things.

1212. I said that if the human mind simply distinguishes in absolute Being the three elements, *subject*, *act* and *terminative essence*, they are not yet the three pure forms of abstracts, which give us the *first* subject, the *first* act and the *first* terminative form, not simply the subject, the act and the terminative form. Note however this is the case, as I said, when with the object present to us we simply make a *distinction* in it and understand that we are dealing with the subject, act and terminative essence of absolute Being. The distinction is not a complete mental separation of the three elements: if we totally separate the subject from the terminative essence, we no longer know the thing it is subject of, because it is the terminative essence (in which the subject's act terminates) that makes it in our mind more a subject of absolute Being than of another ens. Hence the subject, separated totally from this essence, is a pure subject, a pure form and type of a supreme genus of abstracts. In the same way the act is also determined in our mind by the terminative essence. Again therefore the act, separated from this essence, is a pure form of act and we cannot know what act it is. But this is not the case with the terminative essence. This essence, which is precisely what determines the subject and the act, must itself be determined, must retain the characteristic of the ens from which it is extracted, because by its nature it constitutes the determined characteristic of the ens. Granted therefore that the abstraction by mental separation and not by simple distinction is carried out on absolute Being, the terminative essence that is left to us of this Being and that we

have separated by abstraction from the act and subject, must be *something divine*. And as separate from the act and subject, it will be for us a virtual concept of God, a kind of God in potency.

1213. If we examine this terminative essence of absolute Being, we find that it is not simply one but that there are three terminative essences, three terms of the one subject and of the one divine act. These essences are precisely the non-abstract essences called primal forms of Being. We also find that united with identical being they are three persons, and that as abstracts they constitute the three categories: subjectivity, objectivity and morality.

By means of theosophical abstraction therefore, that is, by the abstraction exercised on absolute Being, the mind finds the first two most universal forms of the partial abstracts and sees that the third form is not one but triple. To reduce this form to one, another act of abstraction must be made on the three forms. This abstraction is a common, not a theosophical abstraction, of the kind we can call elementary, an abstraction of an abstraction.

Now, the only thing that the three categories, abstractable from these forms, have in common is their starting point, *being*, which virtually contains the three forms. This common quality (being) of the three forms is called essence, which relative to the forms is initial, but relative to the subject or act is terminative.

1214. We can now draw up the table that shows the order of the first abstracts:

#### TABLE OF THE FIRST ABSTRACTS

- Form of the total abstract, Ens
- First form of the partial abstracts, pure subject
- Second form of the partial abstracts, pure act
- Third form of the partial abstracts, quality or terminative essence (Being, in the sense of essence)
  - A. Category of subjectivity.
  - B. Category of objectivity.
  - C. Category of morality.

*Observations about this table:*

1215. 1. We have seen that each of the four maximum

[1213–1215]

abstracts contains the other three, so that there are now sixteen abstracts ([cf. 1203]). But because the third partial abstract (the terminative essence) is itself an abstract of the three categories, we need to see whether the three maximum abstracts can vest the third form in all three categories. The abstract ens, the subject and the pure act can evidently vest the category of subjectivity and of objectivity, but not always that of morality because not every ens, every subject and pure act can have a moral state. This is because morality is the perfection of the ens, the perfection of the subject and object united together to form a perfect ens. Morality therefore supposes a synthesis, but synthesis is the opposite of abstraction, which in turn is the opposite operation of analysis. In other words, morality is present only when there is an intelligent subject perfectly conformed to the object, and is not of any subject or object, nor of the one separate from the other but both united.

2. We must also note that the first category is the *subject*, the first form of the partial abstracts, a form that, vested with the third form, has become *subjectivity*. We may ask why the subject but not the act becomes the category of subjectivity, why in fact is *actuality* not a category. The answer is that *act* pertains to *being* and not to the *forms of being*. The maximum abstracts are extracted by abstraction from complete ens, and being as well as the forms are in complete ens. Hence, the abstract of being, not simply the abstracts of the forms, had to be also present in the maximum abstracts. The act therefore is dialectically prior and common to the categories, and constitutes none of them.

3. If the subject is classed among the maximum abstracts, we may wonder why the object and the Holy One are not classed among them. They are not classed for the following reason. If the object and the Holy One are understood as subsistents, they have in them the essential subject, and do not pertain to the abstracts. If they are abstracted and considered separate from the subject and from each other, either 1. they put on the subjective form and are dialectical subjects (in this case they still pertain to the first maximum abstract), or 2. they put on the form of act, and thus again do not give a new abstract form, or 3. the mind does not vest them with these forms, in which case they pertain either to the form of abstract ens, or to the form of terminative essence, that is, they pertain to the two categories of

objectivity and holiness, which can be shared, but not abstractly subsist *in se*.

In fact an abstract ens is an ens in the form of object. But the mind can consider an abstract ens as *ens* and *object*. Hence this first maximum abstract can, by an abstraction of abstraction, take two forms.

1216. But let us look more closely at how the first form of being admits two types of abstraction without the need of a second abstraction.

A subject is 'that which is conceived as first in an ens, a container and a cause of unity'.

The subject therefore, as first, can be thought without thought of the object, which pertains to the second categorical form. The object however cannot be thought without the subject because what is second cannot be thought without what is first, although the first can be thought without the second, not as first, but as it is *in se*. Therefore the subject can be thought in two modes: 1. as subsistent (and by abstraction from this, we have the pure subject), and 2. as a form of being, and when being is abstracted from this, the category of subjectivity remains, which constitutes a second form of abstraction. On the other hand, the object cannot subsist in itself as pure object if it does not have in itself the subject, to which subsistence pertains as to that which is first and cause of unity of an ens and hence a constitutive cause of the ens. For this reason there is no subsistent object which, through direct abstraction, allows for any new abstract different from the abstract of the subject or of the act of the subject — if we prescind from this, then the subsistent object from which abstraction may be possible no longer exists. Someone may retort that the object can nevertheless be mentally conceived. True, but it cannot be conceived without the accompaniment of the ens. The object is therefore intuited in the ens. Note however: the subject (at least the abstract subject) can never be lacking in an ens, as the first in it. If therefore we prescind totally from the subject, there is no longer any object; all that remains is 'the quality of object-being', and this is the objectivity that can be predicated of any subject whatsoever.

We see therefore that *subsistence* pertains to subjectivity, and is communicated to object-Being by subject-Being. In God this communication is called 'generation'.

1217. These considerations, which explain and justify the table above, allow us to reduce the first abstracts to the following table:

## TABLE OF THE PRIMAL ABSTRACTS

A. I.

1. Abstract ens — Object
2. Subject
3. Act
4. Essence
5. Subjectivity
6. Objectivity
7. Morality

} All vested with the form of *abstract ens*. This pertains to the faculty of *mental conception*

B. II.

8. Subject
9. Ens
10. Act
11. Essence
12. Subjectivity
13. Objectivity
14. Morality

} All vested with the form of *subject* resulting in six classes of *dialectical subjects*. This vesture pertains to the faculty of *judgment*

C. III.

15. Act
16. Ens
17. Subject
18. Essence
19. Subjectivity
20. Objectivity

} All vested with the form of act

D. IV.

22. Terminative Essence, Entity
23. Actuality
24. Subjectivity
25. Objectivity
26. Morality

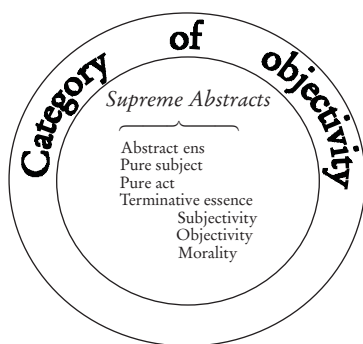
} Categorical forms

These are the first twenty-six classes of all possible abstracts and constitute as many types of abstraction.

1218. But here we are faced with a difficulty which must be solved if we are to establish clearly the relationship between the

maximum abstracts and the categories which themselves are maximum containers. If the categories do not contain everything, how are they a part of this classification, and how does the subject and the act remain outside them and are prior to them?

As in absolute Being, *being* is distinguished by abstraction from its *forms*, so in any mental object whatsoever we must distinguish between an entity that is *thought*, which corresponds to the *principium quod* of the Scholastics, and the *form* in which it is thought, which corresponds to their *principium quo*. Now, the classification of abstracts is the classification of the thought entity, and the categorical forms are included in this classification because they also are considered *thought entities*. But if we consider the form with which all these entities are thought, it remains the same, that is, the *objective*, which constitutes the second category. The whole classification is therefore *abstract entity* divided into its parts and contained in the *object* of the mind. Hence the category of objectivity, taken as the *form with which the mind thinks* and not as the *thought entity*, contains all this classification and also contains itself as a thought entity. Hence, if we need to represent abstract thought by a diagram, we would have to draw the categorical form of objectivity, which contains all abstract entities in particular, as a circle. Inside the circle would be the abstracts distributed organically in the way I have done, and the result would be the following diagram:



## Article 7

Is the light of reason given by God to man an abstract, and what kind of abstract

1219. To begin with, it is not an abstract made by man (*PSY*, 2: 1321). Secondly, it is a maximum container, otherwise it could not be a light capable of making all things known (*PSY*, 2: 1376). Thirdly, it is a first act (*PSY*, 2: 1350–1356), and this first act is *pure act*, without beginning and end, that is, without subject and terminative essence (cf. *Logica*, 334). It is seen by the soul in an objective mode, and to express this mode with which it is seen, it is called *ideal being*.

Without subject and terminative essence, it has the nature of an abstract but not of a man-made abstract but given us fully formed by God.

Abstracts are intelligible forms under the control of the mind, which can apply them to anything it likes. Synthesis, that is, the union of subject, act and terminative essence, reconstructs the ens broken down by abstraction. The terminative essence determines the nature of the ens. If this essence is subjectivity, we have a subjective ens; if objectivity, an objective ens, like ideas. If the terminative essence is simultaneously subjectivity and objectivity, we have a subjective intelligent ens, and if it is simultaneously subjectivity, objectivity and morality, we have a subjective, moral, intelligent ens. The mind, therefore, possessing only this abstract, has the formal means for knowing all abstracts and all subsistent entia, precisely because it has a maximum container.

I say subsistent entia because, we must note, when subjectivity is considered as terminative essence, it is a container and not contained in objectivity. If it were contained in objectivity, this objectivity would be the terminative essence, not subjectivity as we suppose.<sup>12</sup> Subjectivity as container (and only as such it

<sup>12</sup> It may be asked how it is possible to pass from abstract *subjectivity* to real *subject*. Abstract subjectivity 'is an abstract of a non-abstract, that is, subjectivity is the mode of being by which ens subsists'. The application of abstract subjectivity is and can be only the perception of a real subject. It is therefore impossible to predicate abstract *subjectivity* of an ens if the ens is not acknowledged as subsistent. The mind can suppose it such when it is not,

pertains to the categories) is simply *reality*;<sup>13</sup> if it were not, it would be 'the idea of subjectivity', which is precisely subjectivity contained in objectivity. Moreover, the reality *containing* objectivity is solely the mind which is feeling. But there is a feeling that is not a container of the object, nor is it itself contained. This is an imperfect reality, and if the mind posits the form of subjectivity in it, only a dialectical subject results. This feeling which is neither container nor contained has, however, its own terms which are bodies. If to these the mind adds the form of subjectivity, dialectical subjects result. These two species of reality therefore do not pertain to the form of subjectivity as such, but only to the form of dialectical subjectivity, relative only to the mind, which has abstract forms under its control.

1220. Are these imperfect realities excluded from the categories?

The categories can be considered in two modes: as abstract forms of being, from which being is not separated, or as forms from which being is removed by the mind. In the first mode, *imperfect realities* pertain to the categories because, considered solely *in se*, they neither are nor have being. In the second mode they pertain to the form of subjectivity cut off from being; they are terminative essences cut off from the *subject*, but not from the *act*. Someone may object: 'How can the terminative essence subsist if it is not subject?' I say that it cannot exist alone either *in se* or in the mind, except through abstraction. But when united to a subject *in se*, it can exist *in se*, although this subject does not *in se* have it. Thus, bodies and that feeling which is not mind subsist *in se* in union both with the divine mind that produces them and with the mind's feeling that is a true subject. They are an appendage of this feeling and subsist relative to the mind which unites the form of dialectical subject to them.

Categorical subjectivity therefore united to being is the mind. But categorical subjectivity can be conceived united to being in such a way that it identifies with being. In this case we have a subject and a necessary ens. It can also be conceived as because *subjectivity* is an abstract form under the mind's control. It is a *dialectical subject* considered as a subsistent, although in itself it is not such.

<sup>13</sup> *Esse enim est actualitas omnis rei* [being is the actuality of every thing] (St. Th., *S.T.*, 1, q. 5, art. 1).



subjectivity which receives the act of being, where the subjectivity is not this act. Finite minds are of this kind.

Such is the ontological explanation of ideology.

1221. We still need to investigate whether the object-act and light of the mind is precisely the third of the four maximum abstracts I have listed.

In my opinion it is. But this opinion needs explanation because the three partial abstracts (of which the abstract ens is the union) can be conceived in two modes: 1. the mode when subject, act and terminative essence are used to mean *essential concepts*, or 2. the mode when they are used to mean *concepts common* to all subjects, acts and terminative essences, even if these do not exhaust the essence of subject, act and terminative essence. The act therefore that is *essentially* such, is the universal, first act of all; it is perfectly act and obtained solely through a theosophical or divine abstraction. And just as the more includes the less, this first act includes all second and imperfect acts, which lack something of the concept of act. On the other hand, the act conceived solely as equally *common* to all acts, whether these are imperfect or perfect, comes from *common abstraction* and is not understood as containing the fullness of act, which itself remains abstract, and is therefore more an abstraction of abstraction. The light of reason is constituted by the third maximum abstract understood in the first sense, it is constituted by the act which is understood as having the fullness of act. And this act is *being* itself, the most universal act of all, from which the subject and terminative essence were separated, retaining the act in its perfect, essential nature.

### Article 8

The three forms of abstracts compared with the three supreme genera of relationships

1222. If we compare the three forms of partial abstracts with the three supreme relationships, we will understand the place these relationships have in the table of abstracts.

We have seen that these relationships arise from being in its three forms which, understood abstractly, are the categories.

[1221–1222]

We also saw that the categories together with being and ens considered as terminative essence pertain to the third form of abstracts. Consequently, the three supreme relationships also pertain to the third form or supreme genus of partial abstracts, that is, to terminative essence.

In fact, I said that the three supreme relationships are essence, truth and goodness. *Essence* is the fourth supreme genus of abstracts. Truth is a relationship between objectivity and the intelligent subject, an abstraction made by this subject, and therefore pertains to this abstraction. Goodness is morality, an abstraction again made by the subject.

## CHAPTER 9

### The abstract subject and the three genera of dialectical subjects, in addition to the dialectical subjects of negatives

#### Article 1

##### The difference between real subject, abstract subject and purely dialectical subject

1223. The real subject is a subject existing *in se*, to which subsistence therefore belongs. The abstract subject and the dialectical subject exist only in relationship to the mind and are contained in the pure object of the mind. Thus the *real subject* cannot be known as a pure object of the mind. In order to exist, it needs an act of its own which does not pertain to the objective form. As a result, the intelligent subject cannot know it simply by looking in the object; it must also make an act of affirmation, whose term is the act with which the real subject exists *in se*. This act of the real subject, considered by itself, exists outside the objective form. Hence its act cannot be affirmed unless it is either the act by which the intelligent and affirming subject (a substantial feeling) exists (*PSY*, 1: 104–106), or is the subject's action affirmed as performed on the affirming subject itself (cf. *NE*, 2: 695, 720–721, 752–753; fn. 111). Thus, the real subject is known by a real subject that has present to itself the object that makes it intelligent, but performs an act that terminates in the subject and not in the object, although by means of the object it understands that the real subject is outside it, that is, different from it.

The *pure abstract subject* differs from the *dialectical subject* in that the former virtually contains all that can pertain to both the dialectical subject and the real subject. When we say simply 'subject', we mean 'subject, no matter what the conditions necessary for it to be a subject'. Nothing necessary for a subject to be a subject is therefore excluded and, although none of this is determined, everything is accepted without thought determining anything. The *pure abstract subject* is thus a perfect but

virtual subject; it includes a virtual subsistence contained in the objective form from which it is extracted by affirmation.

The *dialectical subject*, on the other hand, does not include, not even virtually, all the conditions of a perfect, real subject; it excludes some. The mind forms this subject by applying the abstract form of subjectivity to something which in itself is not a subject. Thus, in the propositions, 'An ens is that which exists', 'Act is better than potency', 'The terminative essence is being that is divided from the subject and the act', etc., the mind takes *ens*, *act* and *essence* as if they were true subjects, when they are not. *Act* and *essence* are simply abstract concepts which present mental entities to our mind, not entities that are entia existing in themselves. The concept of ens certainly contains the concept of subject but the former is not the latter — considered on its own it is only *object*. In the concept of *act*, and also of *essence*, the characteristics proper to a true, real subject are not only not virtually contained but are excluded. The mind therefore, compelled to reason separately about them, treats them as if they were subjects, although it truly knows that they are not such.

I have explained why the mind cannot reason about any abstract part of an ens without vesting it in the form of subject. Because a subject is that which in an ens 'is first, container and cause of unity', it is clear that when we wish to speak about an abstract part of an ens (such a part is not a subject, is not what is first), the abstract part remains first before the mind, and is container and cause of the unity of all that can be distinguished in it — it stands before the mind with the characteristics proper to and distinctive of the *subject*. These characteristics have a hypothetical truth, which we can express as: 'If the mind wants to remove the first element from its thought, what is left becomes first, that is, subject.' The abstracting mind makes this hypothesis when it leaves aside what is first in the ens and considers exclusively only something posterior.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The *pure abstract subject* is an ideal subject; *dialectical subjects* are *mental subjects*. In *Logica* (422–423), I called both *ideal* and *mental* subjects dialectical. But it is more fitting to reserve 'dialectical' only for mental subjects.

Article 2

The three genera of dialectical subjects, in addition to the dialectical subjects of negatives.

1224. As a result of all this the supreme genera of dialectical subjects can be only six. They are simply abstracts vested by the mind with the form of subject, although in themselves they are not subjects. In the case of the maximum abstracts (excluding the pure subject), they are, as we have seen, six: ens, act, essence and the three categories. Hence, the supreme genera of dialectical subjects are also six and serve as types of all dialectical subjects. If, however, we consider that the three categories do not differ in dialectical form from the form of terminative essence, the supreme genera of dialectical subjects must reduce to three: ens, act and terminative essence, understood in discussion as the subject of propositions.

Negatives can also be vested with the form of subject but I will speak about them later.

## CHAPTER 10

### The abstract ens and the six genera of dialectical entia, in addition to the negatives

1225. As I said earlier when discussing act, the abstract ens can be considered in two ways: either 1. as an *ens by essence*, that is, it has the full concept of an ens although implicitly, and is given us only by *theosophical* abstraction, or 2. as a *most common ens*, predicated equally of every ens, including those that do not have the perfect concept of entia. We obtain it by *common abstraction* and, relative to the first abstraction, it can be called abstraction of abstraction.

The abstract ens, understood in this second way, is applied by the mind to entia that do not have the full concept of entia (for example, all subsistent finite entia) and also to those that are not in any way entia because they lack all concept of an ens, for example, abstract elements of entia. These are called dialectical entia.

All three elements of an ens are necessary to it. Hence, when an ens is divided into its three elements, these separate elements cannot be conceived except by supposing them to be entia, because what is not an ens or not vested with the form of an ens is not conceivable. The mind is therefore forced to understand as present the other two elements that are missing in each of the three elements, and leaves them undetermined; it includes them virtually, as conditions of the particular element it is actually considering.

There are therefore as many dialectical entia as there are elements of an ens, granted these can all be vested with the abstract form of an ens. Hence, dialectical entia appear as *entia* and therefore as *objects* to the mind which considers them apart from the subject, the act and the terminative essence. And because the terminative essence of first abstraction and of theosophical abstraction is triple, the three categories are also conceived by the mind as dialectical entia and objects.

A purely dialectical ens can also be called a non-ens because in

effect it is not an ens but an element of an ens that the mind has vested with the abstract vesture of an ens.

The form of an ens can also be predicated of negatives, but I will discuss these later.

It may be asked why I have distinguished only three genera of dialectical *subjects* (positives) but six genera of dialectical *entia*, even though both groups are formed by applying the abstract form to positive entities that do not properly have this form.

The reason is that in the case of subjects, the genera are constituted by the abstract form of subject and by that which possesses nothing of the subject except ens which, precisely through this property, constitutes a genus of dialectical subjects distinct from the others. Consequently, the genera of dialectical subjects must be taken from the genus of abstracts to which the form of subjects is applied. And because the three categories have the same abstract form of terminative essence, they do not constitute separate dialectical subjects. On the other hand, in the case of an ens, although it certainly finds an element identical to itself in all six abstracts, this element differs in all these abstracts and in the categorical forms. Therefore, the difference, repeated six times, must constitute six genera of dialectical entia, in addition to the genera resulting from negations.

## CHAPTER 11

### The seven genera of primal, abstract acts

1226. The act that is understood as having the fullness of act is the first act, because the second act is not fully act and exists only in virtue of the first; hence it does not have *per se* the nature of act but only by dependence on another act.

The act which is understood as having this fullness of act is the act of being, which is first, and without it, there is no other act, nor is it borrowed from another act (*PSY*, 2: 1350–1356).

Whatever we conceive therefore, must be conceived as an act of being. Otherwise it would not be conceived: what is second cannot be conceived without what is first.

Hence, if seven abstracts (ens, subject, act, terminative essence and the three categories) are conceived, seven genera of acts must also be conceived: the pure act, and the act partly determined in six ways. These six are virtually comprised in the pure act.

They are not simply something different from the act, something vested with the form of the act as foreign to it; if they were, they should be called dialectical acts. Properly speaking however they are acts and therefore must be called true acts, not dialectical acts.

But these true acts differ from the pure act because, in addition to the concept of act, they have another concept. This other concept, when referred to the concept of act, adds some determination to it, although, in the case of abstracts considered individually, none fully determines it.

To understand this better, we must recall that the pure *act*, as a supreme abstract, can be understood in two ways: 1. as a *first act*, which has the full concept of act, and 2. as a *common act*, where the full concept of act is not considered. This common act is a predicate of every act, even an imperfect act and does not have the full concept of act but shares in it in some way.

If the six acts are compared to the *first act* (initial being), they are simply a *continuation* of this and thus are not acts but, as I said, abstract determinations of the first act. But if they are



considered in relationship to the *common act*, this act is predicated equally of all of them. This causes them to be considered as *genera of acts* whose difference consists in their continuing the first act according to different elements of an ens.

We must also consider the difference between the mind's concept when it considers the *first act* in an ens and the *first act in se* where it prescind from any other ens whatever (which is the concept simply of initial being). The first act in an ens is the *subject* itself. I have defined the subject as 'that which in an ens is seen as first, container and cause of unity'. In other words, it is the first act proper to the ens as an element of its nature. Because entia are different, the first act proper to each is different, just as the subjects of different entia are different. In all finite entia the first act proper to them is not the abstract *first act* because this act is *initial being*. Initial being is a universal first act and is prior to the first proper act which the subject is and which pertains to the category of subjectivity, and is not being but what is real. Consequently, not only the act as *common abstract* but the *abstract first act* is universal and not proper to any finite ens. Nor is this *abstract first act* proper to an infinite ens, because only the *infinite subject* can be considered as first act of an infinite ens. This infinite subject is subsistent Being in its subjective form, and this Being is not abstract. But if, in this infinite subject which is first act in an infinite ens, the concept of *first act* is separated from the concept of *subject* by theosophical abstraction, then the *abstract first act* has been formed which, as I said, is *initial being*. Initial being is a subjective act that is therefore seen by the mind in the object, as an entity in an idea.

## CHAPTER 12

### The terminative essence, and the lower genera into which it divides

1227. After discussing the abstract ens, the abstract subject and the abstract act, we must speak about the terminative essence. This essence is both positive and negative. However negative essence does not pertain to the supreme genus as something formed later by the mind, but reduces to the supreme genus. In fact the negative reduces to the genus of the positive because, adding only negation, it retains the *fundamental concept* of the genus, whereas lower genera add some difference to the *fundamental concept* of the genus. The negative adds nothing more than the negation made by the mind; it posits no difference in the genus because negation remains external to the genus. And this explains the philosophical word ‘reduction’. Thus, when a genus retains the concept by which it is formed and the mind adds some operation which does not limit the genus, the object resulting from this operation is not a new genus but the first on which the mind has done some work; hence we say that this object *reduces* to the genus. I will therefore first speak about negative essences and then positive essences as well as subordinate genera.

#### Article 1

#### Negative essences and their genera

1228. A positive abstract, if fully formed when given to the mind, can be the object of the simple faculty of intuition. This is the case of pure *being*, which God makes present to the finite subject and thus forms the mind.

However, when we have to produce abstracts for ourselves, intuition is not enough — we ourselves have to act and produce the object. Thus, either the operation of abstraction must be preceded by affirmation, or this faculty of affirmation must participate in the operation that produces the abstract. It is

sufficient that in universalisation affirmation precedes. However, although universalisation can be considered as a special form of abstraction, it is not, strictly speaking, abstraction (cf. *NE*, 2: 490–519). In abstraction strictly understood, the abstract is always vested with the form that is ens, and every vesting with abstract forms implies a species of affirmation or predication. Affirmation must therefore be involved in abstraction. It is also necessary in the formation of all negative abstracts because 1. these originate from comparison and subtraction (cf. *Logica*, 656–672), 2. something subtracted is the same as saying something negated, and finally 3. this subtracted or negated thing cannot become an object of the mind unless it is vested with the form that is ens. Moreover, *to negate* and *to affirm* pertain to the same faculty, and both are included in the meaning of the verb ‘to predicate’.

The negative object therefore, in so far as negative, can be defined as ‘an entity that is not’, and in so far as an object of knowledge, as ‘a negated entity’. But ‘an entity that is not’ is not an entity, it is nothing. Thus, the negative, as negative, is not something that is. However in the definition ‘an entity that is not’, the word *entity* is indefinite and means something of an ens, and in varying degree. Consequently, ‘not being a given entity’, although nothing in itself, and referring to the entity that is negated, does not necessarily mean there is nothing outside the negated entity to which this entity, if it were, would pertain. In fact entities exist that pertain to a subject that remains, even though the entities themselves are not, as in the case of accidental entities. If therefore the entity in the phrase, ‘an entity that is not’, is something pertaining to a given subject, the lack of the entity also pertains to that subject. In this case, the mind cannot consider ‘the entity that is not’ separately from the subject (except by a new abstraction and division from the subject); it must consider it relative to the subject, that is, such an entity has the nature of predicate negated of a subject.

1229. But because the four abstract forms are under the control of the mind, and with them it can vest everything it conceives in any way it likes, the negative can also appear vested with each of the four forms and thought as ens, subject, act and terminative essence; it can also be vested with the *affirmative form*, an act that algebra makes much use of. However, as we

have seen, the fact that an entity can be vested with one of the four abstract forms does not mean that it possesses this form as naturally proper to it. We therefore need to investigate the nature of the forms or the form proper to the negative abstract, and whether negative abstracts are distributed, like positive abstracts, into four genera, each of which has its own form. The correspondence between negative and positive abstracts would seem to support this, because every positive can be negated.

But this is not the case. 'A negated entity' can be only a predicable because every negative known by the mind implies a negation, that is, 'a negated entity'. The form proper to it therefore is 'not a predicable already predicated (this comes later), but a predicable in the proper sense of having the capacity to be predicated, which is precisely what a terminative essence is'.

Consequently the form proper to abstract negatives is only one, the fourth form. Negatives therefore do not constitute an extra abstract form but are a genus of abstracts, subordinate to the fourth of the supreme genera, whether the subject of which they are predicated is real or abstract or true or dialectical.

The matter will be clearer if we consider the difference between a positive abstract and a negative.

The positive abstract in itself is always some part of an ens, that is, either the ens itself resulting from its three abstract elements, or one of these three elements, whether the principle (the subject) or the means (the act), or the end (the predicable) or terminative essence. But the negative abstract as such is nothing of this because considered on its own it is nothing, and relative to the mind it is something negated, the product of negation. But the product of negation always has the form of terminative essence which presupposes both the subject (of which it can be negated) and the act of this subject. The product of negation therefore retains only the last part of the ens, the terminative essence.

It may be said that this causes no difficulty when the negation is not a complete negation, for example the concepts of limitation and deprivation, which are in fact predicated of some entity. But in the case of *nothing*, understood absolutely, a concept produced by a complete negation, it seems that it cannot by its nature be a predicate, because *nothing*, due to lack of a subject, cannot be predicated of anything.

I reply that even the pure concept of nothing is predicated of an ens by means of negation; the concept simply and totally negates a true and simultaneously dialectical ens. Hence the concept of *nothing* would be impossible unless there were first the concept of an ens. All languages always express this mental relationship with an ens [*ente*] in the name they give the concept. Thus, *niente* [Italian, 'nothing'] (or as the ancients said *neente*) is *né-ente* [no-ens, no-thing]; *nullus* [none] is *nec-ullus* [not-anyone]; *nihilum* [nothing] is *nec-hilum* [not anything], etc.

1230. If we wish to investigate the most extensive genera of negative essences, we must take the table of positive essences and apply negation to it.

The table presents five supreme genera. Two (*entity* and *actuality*) pertain to being, and three (*subjectivity*, *objectivity* and *morality*) pertain to the forms of being.

Hence, there are also five supreme genera of negative essences:

- negated entity
- negated actuality
- negated subjectivity
- negated objectivity
- negated morality

Because every affirmed or negated essence refers to a subject, the meaning of the negation varies in the way the subject varies. Thus, whenever the subject of what is negated is identical to the negated thing, we have the concept of abstract *nothing*. Equally, there is nothing if we negate the entity of the entity, the actuality of the actuality, the subjectivity of the subjectivity, etc. As a result the mind can form the concept of abstract *nothing* in five generic modes.

We must also remember that entity, actuality, subjectivity, objectivity and morality are supreme genera of terminative essences, that is, predicables. Because they are all most universal, they all pertain to the first of the seven predicables I discussed in *Logica* (416) under 'most universal essence'. Below these supreme genera there are the six lower predicables. These, when classified according to their extension, are either genera or species, but classified according to what they include, they are *differential*, *integral*, *accidental*, or *real essences* and can all be

negated of a subject. If the supreme genera are negated, every entity, actuality, subjectivity, etc. is negated because the supreme genus contains all the lower concepts. Hence, if the four first supreme genera are negated to any subject of negation, there is again nothing, because the subject is annihilated with the negation of every entity, every actuality, etc., of any subject. This is not the case with the fifth genus, the category of morality. This is a category of perfection and, if perfection is negated, something can still remain before the mind, an ens, an act, a subject, an object. These four things are therefore another four modes of subtraction that result in nothing; added to the first five modes, they give us nine *generic modes of negations* which give the concept of *nothing*.

1230a. But if we take an ens as the subject of the negation, we have the following five cases:

1. If the genus of entity, that is, every entity, is negated of an ens, the concept of *nothing* still remains (this is the first of the nine generic modes of negation which give us *nothing* as a mental product).

2. If the genus of actuality, every actuality, is negated, the concept of *absolute potentiality* remains.

3. If the categorical form of subjectivity is negated, the concept of purely objective ens, *idea*, remains. This concept also excludes the form of morality.

4. If the categorical form of objectivity is negated, the concept of the *finite real* remains, lacking intelligence. Again the form of morality is excluded from this concept.

5. If the categorical form of morality is negated, the following three concepts remain: the concept of a) pure object, b) pure real, and c) evil ens.

Hence, the following are genera of negative concepts: 1. *nothing*, 2. *potency*, 3. *idea*, 4. *finite real*, and 5. *evil*.

Negative concepts, therefore, produced by negation, vary in two ways: 1. the subject of which something is negated can vary; 2. the essence that is negated can vary. *Negative concepts* are consequently innumerable because the possible *subjects* of negation are innumerable. The mind can take as subject not simply things that in themselves are subjects, but can form *dialectical subjects* as it wills. In other words, the mind can convert every entity into a subject of a negating proposition. Similarly,

the *essences* that can be negated are innumerable, because in addition to the five supreme genera there are all the subordinate essences. All these essences that vary in extension and diversity and can be negated, can also themselves be negatives.

1231. We must therefore note the relationship between the nature of the subject of which something is negated and the nature of the negated essence. This relationship varies, and with it varies the product of the negated thing.

I. If the relationship between the subject and its negated essence is such that the nature of the former excludes the essence, the product takes the form of *natural limitation*. *Natural limitation* is what a subject does not admit according to its nature.

But that which presents itself under the form of a *natural limitation* is not always a true *limitation*, because true limitation depends on the nature of the negated essence.

a) If the nature of the negated essence is absolutely a perfection, there is a true limitation. Thus, in negating wisdom to a stone, we negate what its very nature excludes. But because wisdom is absolutely a perfection, the product of the negation informs us of a true limitation of the stone.

b) If the negated essence is a quantity in which the subject whose quantity is negated can participate to varying degree without the nature of the subject being perfected, the negation results again in a limitation. Thus, if we negate to a column the greater height it does not have, we pronounce a material limitation of the column.

c) If the negated essence is not absolutely a perfection but a perfection relative to another subject, it is not a perfection or an increase for the subject of which it is negated; on the contrary it would be an imperfection for it. The negation results in a product that has the dialectical form of limitation but is not such; it simply expresses the removal of a limitation and a perfection of the subject. Thus, if we negate of God the limited perfections of creatures, he is not truly limited but rather shown as unlimited nature. Our concept of God is a *negative concept* because we form it by negating of God all the properties of finite things (I mean the properties that are perfections for finite things). But this does not mean that a concept devoid of perfection has been extracted from the negations. On the contrary,

our negation has simply removed limits and increased the concept, because the essences we have negated are only relative perfections; they are absolute imperfections which, if attributed to God, would destroy the concept of perfection and absolute unlimitedness of such an ens. To negate to the subject therefore what is inferior to the subject's nature is not to limit it but increase it, although the dialectical form is the form of negation and limitation.

d) Similarly, if the essence negated of a subject is negative, we have a negation of a negation. This is the same as asserting its essence positively understood. It is an apparent and purely dialectical limitation.

1231a. We must bear in mind therefore that the forms of affirmation and negation are forms that obtain their concepts from free intelligence. Because such intelligence has control over its forms, it can vest any entity it likes with them. Thus, after vesting an entity with the form that is negation, it can vest this vested entity again with the same negative form, and so on indefinitely, according to the number of negations exercised upon it. Nevertheless the only thing that remains truly negative is an entity that has an uneven number of negative vestures, and the only entity that remains truly affirmative is always that which has no negative vesting, or has an even number of these dialectical forms.

We must also note that the subject of negation can exclude a given essence in two ways:

1. The essence may not be necessary for the completion of the subject's nature. But there would be no contradiction if this nature, while having the essence as something foreign to it, has it as an enrichment of itself. For example, external wealth is excluded from the concept of human nature and adds nothing to this nature, although having it is an advantage for human beings. It is the same in the supernatural order: although this order is excluded from human nature, it elevates human nature above itself.

2. The essence may not only not be necessary for the completion of the subject's nature, but in fact cannot be added to it.

Both ways are *natural limitation*. The first is *removable natural limitation* because the nature itself has the *potency* to



receive; the second, *irremovable natural limitation* because the nature of the subjects has no potency to receive.

II. The relationship between the subject of the negation and the essence negated of the subject can be such that this essence is not excluded from the nature of the subject. However, instead of forming the specific essence of the subject, the negated essence forms its completion which, as such, is required by the nature of the subject. In this case, the product of the negation implies *privation* which, although of many kinds, reduces to the following two supreme genera: 1. privation of an integral essence, and 2. privation of an accidental essence.

Finally, both the *integral essence* and the negated *accidental essence* can pertain to the category of reality or of objectivity or of morality.

## Article 2

### Positive essences and their genera

1232. *Terminative essences* are *predicables* in the proper sense of the word: they are not yet predicated of any subject. When predicated, they change form, that is, they take the form of the abstracts I have called *common* ([cf. 1186]). Because this form is posterior, the predicate is, in the order of its formation, posterior to the predicable. The predicable is *separate* from the subject and the subject's act, whereas the predicate is only *distinct*. I will make some observations about each of the five supreme genera of terminative essences.

#### §1. *Entity*

1233. *Entity* names the predicable; *ens* names the corresponding predicate, which is the entity predicated. Predication therefore gives a subject the dialectical form of *ens*.

But the dialectical form which the mind gives to a subject by predication is not always the form proper to the subject. We distinguish therefore between an *ens considered in se* and a

*dialectical ens*. These are two first genera of entia: the predicated entity is always the same but acquires a different meaning from the different nature of the subject of which it is predicated.

Entity is predicable of every conceivable thing because everything can be understood by the mind as a subject of a proposition. Consequently, the word 'entity' is used to indicate everything, and I have defined it accordingly as 'the object, no matter which, that thought sees as one' ([cf. 224]). But if we wanted to remove the objective form from the definition, it would be sufficient to say 'that which thought sees as one'.

But how can a subject be or not be an ens that is considered *in se*? And even if it is not such, how can the mind vest it with the dialectical form? I have said, and I repeat: the explanation is the intelligence's two ways of acting: intelligence is both free and necessary. To consider an ens *in se* is to consider it with necessary intelligence, which does not have the object under its control precisely because the object is the ens exactly as it is, neither more nor less. Vesting it with a dialectical form not proper to it is the function of free intelligence. The ens pertains to free intelligence in so far as this fixes it in its gaze, and as such the intelligence can break it down into parts, take these parts as forms and, because the parts are its production and under its complete control, posit them where it likes.

We have already examined the nature of the first six, supreme classes of dialectical entia, to which we must add all negatives that taken together constitute a seventh class. I will speak therefore about the entity applied to that which is ens considered *in se*.

Ens considered *in se* has four genera: 1. abstract ens, 2. ens as subject, 3. ens as object, and 4. ens as holy. The last two are different genera of purely mental entia (cf. *NE*, 2: 655).

Whenever an ens lacks subjective existence, it is abstract, in the most universal sense of this word. It therefore always lacks moral existence as well.

Consequently, all the kinds of abstract entia (I mean non-dialectical entia that however have the form proper to entia) have the common characteristic that they lack subjective existence and hence moral existence.

They differ however according to the degree of abstraction. The abstraction is maximum when an ens is thought, in which

case, its elements (subject, act and terminative essence) are thought. These three elements are left in maximum indetermination and, considered as supreme abstracts, are present precisely in this indetermination. Minimum abstraction takes place when the ens under consideration results from the three elements determined up to the full and fullest species. This abstract ens of minimum abstraction can be realised because all that it lacks is subjective existence, which is the only thing that abstraction removes from it. It is therefore the only abstract that has all the necessary predispositions for receiving this existence.

This manner of abstraction, when performed by a human being, is more appropriately called *universalisation* (cf. *NE*, 2: 490–504), and by means of it God created the world, as I said in book two.

## §2. Actuality

1234. Because an *ens* includes all three elements of an ens, it is not a terminative essence, for the reason that it is vested by the mind with the form of terminative essence and thus becomes an *entity*. Nor is the abstract *act* a terminative essence, because it lies between the subject and the terminative essence, but the mind vests it with this form and it becomes an *actuality*. Nor is the abstract *subject* naturally a terminative essence; rather it is the first of the elements of an ens, but the mind vests it with the terminative form and it becomes a *subjectivity*. Consequently, only the two essences of *objectivity* and *morality* have the nature of terminative essences.

In fact, the object is naturally the term of the mind's act. It presupposes present to itself 1. the subject, that is, the mind, and 2. the act of this subject. It therefore has the condition of term. Equally, the moral presupposes present to itself the subject and the subject's moral act. Hence, it has the nature of terminative essence.

When therefore we say 'object' or 'the moral', we understand an 'ens'. We cannot conceive that the object and the moral subsist by themselves unless they are an ens. Hence, the object and the moral are called *qualified substantives*, uniting subject

and predicate in one word. Because a predicate is posterior to the predicable and because a predicable that is not yet predicated has the form of essence, the correct name of the two essences must be *objectivity* and *morality*, not object or moral, which are posterior names.

But *morality* is understood more as terminative essence because it presupposes the object present to it and admits nothing further posterior to itself. Hence it is the absolute term of the act.

1234a. *Act* therefore has its own form, and *actuality* is a form put over it. Thus, 'actuality' expresses a concept posterior to that expressed by 'act'.

The abstract act is conceived as lying between the subject and the terminative essence. But the act, in its real existence, cannot be without both the subject which precedes it and the essence in which it terminates. The subject is in fact its principle; the qualitative essence its term. Therefore neither the subject nor the terminative essence can be thought without the act, just as we cannot think the point where a line begins and the point where it terminates without the line; if we remove every possible line, we also remove the points of its extremities. If we remove every act, both the subject and the terminative essence disappear. Therefore, the abstract concept of subject is that of an initial act, and the abstract concept of qualificative essence is that of a final act. These three abstract acts constitute one act in reality, and this one act is an *ens* in so far as one.

Consequently, there are no *dialectical acts* except for *negatives* that are conceived as vested with the form of *ens* and therefore also of *act*. In this, the *abstract act* differs from the *ens* and the *subject*, because there are dialectical subjects and entia (not every thinkable object is a subject or a true *ens*). On the other hand we cannot think anything positive that is not at least an initial or final true act.

Acts must therefore be distinguished into *positive* and *negative* — the latter are dialectical acts.

Positive acts can be further distinguished into three kinds: *initial acts*, *real acts* and *finalising acts*.

*Initial* acts always have the nature of either a true or dialectical *subject*. The subject is true relative to the acts and to the abstract essences that can be predicated of it; it is dialectical

relative to the real acts or to the abstract essences that might be predicated of it.

Finalising acts have the nature of *terminative essence*.

In-between acts have the pure, simple nature of *act*.

1235. As long as the *subject* is abstract and separated by the mind from its act and from the terminative essence, it is not a complete subject. Indeed real subsistence necessarily pertains to a complete subject, and subjectivity consists in this subsistence. Thus, whenever we take an abstract subject and predicate some real acts and terminative essences of it, this subject becomes a dialectical subject. It is not a true subject because it is not the true subject of the real acts and real essences predicated of it. This is precisely the case of *being*, the object of intuition. Being is the *initial act* of all entia. When taken as subject of all ideas, it is their subject *in se* but always an incomplete subject because abstract. But when taken as subject of all subsistent entia, it is only a dialectical subject because the mind considers it as what is first, container and cause of unity in the mind. In fact, in this relationship between being and things we have seen the origin of the system of *dialectical identity*.

All this is true therefore in the order in our mind, in the order of abstraction that pertains to free intelligence. But it is not true in the order of the existence of things considered in themselves; this order pertains to necessary intelligence.

What then does the mind do when it considers *initial being* as a universal subject? In abstraction it has divided up the total subject, which is subsistent. It has left aside the subject's in-between act and finalising act (although in reality these two acts are necessary ingredients for constituting the subject) and has retained solely the subject's initiation, that is, the initial act. The mind has then considered this initial act as if it were the subject of the in-between act and finalising act, which are both divided from it. Because the absolutely initial act is necessarily what the mind first conceived (the second cannot be conceived without the first), the mind was able to take the abstract, which has the nature of a conceivable first, as the universal subject of all things. But all this takes place in the world of abstraction, that is, of free intelligence. If however the mind wished to transport this abstract dialectical subject into the order of reality by declaring it subsistent, it would contradict itself because it

would declare as real the subject it has drawn from the real and stripped of all reality. Pantheism would be the result of such a vulgar contradiction.

1235a. Moreover we see here the reason why *subjectivity* is also placed among *terminative essences* whose nature it is to be the last things of an ens, despite the fact that the subject has the characteristic of being what is first in the ens.

This happens due to the two ways we conceive what pertains to the subject.

The abstract *subject* is an initial act, it does not mean a whole subject, precisely because it is abstract and divided from the act and the terminative form. The mind that conceives the *initial act* as subject can add the act and terminative essence to it and thus make it whole. If this terminative essence simply makes the abstract subject whole, reducing it to a complete subject, this is called *subjectivity*. In this way subjectivity is considered as a *form of being*, one of its three terms. In absolute Being these terms identify with being, but free intelligence, using its abstractive faculty, can divide them and consider being on its own as initial act, that is, the abstract subject of the three forms.

Consequently, the expression, 'to predicate the actuality of a subject', means to attribute to a subject its *in-between act*.

But because the *subject* to which the predicate is applied can vary limitlessly — it can be this or that subject or a subject *in se* or a dialectical subject — then the *in-between act* predicated of it takes on different meanings. The predicated actuality also takes on different meanings, according to the different terminative essence that determines its quality. As we have seen, when the three elements of an ens are used to form a proposition, each can be put in place of the other two by vesting it with their form. Hence, the in-between act and the terminative essence can appear vested with the dialectical form of subject, whose *in-between act* will be one of the other two elements that is vested with an in-between act. This further vesting with dialectical forms implies and infinitely multiplies the number of propositions, and can easily confuse reason or give way to sophistry. However the errors of sophistry can be avoided whenever the web of dialectical forms that enveloped the first simple concepts is unravelled.

1236. Finally we can examine the nature of the connection

that the in-between act considered *in se* has with the subject and the terminative essence.

The connection is double: 1 identity, and 2. diversity.

The connection of identity exists when, in the order of objects *in se* (which pertains to necessary intelligence), there is nothing that can indicate a distinction between the in-between act and its two extremities. Note however that in the order of abstraction (which pertains to free intelligence), the in-between act can be distinguished from its two extremities.

The connection of diversity exists when in the object *in se* something exists which distinguishes the in-between act from its extremities.

The following illustrates when these cases are verified and the nature of their distinguishing characteristic.

The characteristic is: 'Whenever what is conceived as an in-between act and as a terminative essence that determines it is not essential to the subject, or is such that it limits the initial actuality conceived in the subject, the in-between act considered *in se* is distinguished from the subject. The foundation for this distinction is the difference between potency and act, or restriction of the initial actuality.'

'On the other hand, whenever what is conceived as an in-between act and as a terminative essence that determines it is essential to the subject and has the same extension as the initial actuality of the subject, it is distinguished only abstractly from the subject — there is nothing in the ens considered *in se* that can serve as a foundation for the distinction.'

We see therefore that there are three cases where no distinction exists between the subject and the act:

1. The act of initial being is identical to initial being considered as subject. Initial being is an abstract subject stripped of all terminative essence, leaving only the abstract *first act*. Reduced solely to the abstract first act in its concept, initial being has the nature of a dialectical subject, because subject is 'that which is first'. But if we ask what the act of this subject is, we will find only the subject itself. Thus, considered as an act by the mind, it is still the previous identical act seen by the mind under another concept. The distinction is purely mental, without any foundation for a distinction in being *in se*. This act, which is being, is essential, precisely because it is

being. However, it has no terminative essence, which it must have if the mind wishes to conceive it as an ens. The mind therefore considers the act as a terminative essence. Thus we see that the act, having the same extension as the terminative essence, is equal to the total extension of the subject, and the terminative essence is also being. Hence, the mind can consider being as subject, act and terminative essence, but the form proper to it is that of act; the other two forms are added by the mind, as the manager of its forms.

1236a. 2. Absolute Being, God, does not admit any distinction as such of subject and act. The act, which is as extensive as the subject, is essential to absolute Being. Any distinction made by our mind has no foundation in the object *in se*; the distinction is made by our free mind which applies to the object the two conceptual forms of subject and act. These two forms, as abstracts, are distinct. Hence, when the mind applies them, one after the other, it refers the distinction present in them to the object to which it applies them, although there is no such distinction in the object.

The act of the divine subject is therefore both essential to the subject and fully adequate. These two conditions however are fulfilled in three different modes, because this sublime Being has three terminative forms, each of which is adequate to the whole of being. The three modes are: 1. subjectivity — this completes being as subject (subsisting, living, understanding, loving), 2. objectivity — by this the subject is made *per se* an affirmed object, that is, posited as a term of affirmation, 3. holiness — by this the subject-affirmed object is made *per se* loved, that is, posited as a term of love. Through these three modes the ens is one and identical in the three subsistent and distinct forms, persons, each of which is adequate to the whole of being, from which they are not *in se* distinguished — they are distinguished solely by the way the free, abstracting mind conceives them.

3. The act as subject does not admit distinction *in se* from its act, because the act makes the terminative essence and form adequate and identical. The free mind, by applying many abstract forms to an identical, totally simple subject, can multiply it relative to itself without the subject *in se* being many. This is called 'distinction of pure concept'. — All



perfectly identical propositions reduce to this case, because the act in them, determined by the terminative essence, does not in itself differ in any way from the subject of the proposition; the mind simply vests the subject with different abstract forms.

### §3. *Subjectivity*

1237. We have seen that the mind forms the abstract concept of an ens by taking from the object of its gaze all three united elements of the ens and leaves aside all their determinations. Hence in the abstract thought of an ens 'the ens is thought but the kind of subject, act and terminative essence it has is not thought because this determination is set aside'. The subject thought in an abstract ens is the abstract subject, not in the sense that it is the first subject, but that it is *subject in the most common sense*. The act thought in an abstract ens is not the absolutely first act but *act in the most common sense*. Similarly, the terminative essence does not pertain to the first essences but is *essence in the most common sense*, which, as I said, is an abstract of second abstraction.

Consequently, *terminative essences of first abstraction* can be predicated of an abstract ens and, relative to most common essence, have the nature of determinations.

Terminative essences of first abstraction that determine the more abstract concept of most common essence are the three categorical forms of being, of which the first is *subjectivity*.

*Subjectivity* considered in a subsistent ens has only the form of subject, which makes it the first element of the ens. But considered in relationship to an abstract ens taken as subject, it is predicated of this ens by the mind as *terminative essence*, that is, as the third element in the order it has in this dialectical way of conceiving.

However, if instead of considering the terminative form of *subjectivity* in relationship to the abstract ens, we consider it in relationship to *initial being*, we find that in predicating subjectivity of initial being, we do not in fact predicate *most common essence* as a determination (because this essence is not in initial being), but predicate one of the three terminative essences of direct abstraction. The predication unites a terminative essence

to initial being, which previously had none. If therefore we take an abstract subject such as initial being, then in relationship to it subjectivity has truly the form of terminative essence, the formal cause of the subsistent subject that comes from it.

1237a. Initial being is produced by a theosophical abstraction exercised on absolute Being by free intelligence. This abstraction is not made by man but by God, as I keep saying. It is communicated to human beings fully formed by God who gives it existence. In fact it cannot be made on finite real entia where *common abstraction* is exercised, because they are not entia for us until we unite initial being, which we possess, to the sensible real. If we withdraw this being from them, we simply take away what we had previously given them. This is so true that none of the real finite entia is its own being, and much less is it initial being in all its universality. When we extract initial being from these entia, we do not find it in them as a constitutive of their essence or nature, but as something added from outside and not confused with their essence; it is added, I say, as cause of their existence. Nor does initial being originate through an abstraction made on *most common abstract ens*. This ens, precisely because most common, does not necessarily include initial being but only the essence common to all entia. This essence varies because in finite entia it does not include initial being, which is included in the essence of infinite Ens. Hence, in order to extract initial being by means of abstraction, we have to go right up to infinite Ens and not stop at most common ens. But if anyone wanted to extract the initial being of infinite Ens by abstraction, they would have to possess it already in their thought before making any abstraction. In fact we do not obtain the concept of infinite Ens except through a series of many abstractions, syntheses and reasonings. If therefore, by means of theosophical abstraction, we extract initial being from infinite Ens, we do so because we already possess it through intuition; we do not produce it for our mind but must conclude we receive it fully produced.

*Subjectivity*, therefore, has the form of terminative essence only in relationship to two abstract, dialectical subjects: *abstract ens* and *initial being* that considered *in se*, without any relationships, is the very first act, but in a different mode.

1238. However *subjectivity* can be considered a terminative

essence, that is, a predicable, of these subjects in two ways: by an *analytical* or a *synthetical judgment* (cf. *NE*, 1: 342).

An analytical judgment adds nothing to the subject of a proposition, it simply divides and explains it. Of this kind are the propositions, 'An abstract ens is an undetermined subject' and 'Initial being is the antecedent subject of all finite entia'. In these propositions the predicated subjectivity is that contained in an abstract ens, that is, an undetermined subjectivity; it is the same subjectivity that is contained in initial being, a dialectical subjectivity relative to real entities.

Subjectivity can, in this way, be predicated of every entity, but predicated *subjectivity* does not have the same meaning in all these propositions. Predicated subjectivity is the subject vested with the form of a predicate, and just as the subject varies, so the predicate varies.

For the rest, we see here the ontological explanation for this form of judgments, which have the appearance of a tautology. *Analytical judgments* originate 'from the mind's power to vest the subject in the form of a predicable and predicate. Consequently, the mind can predicate the same thing of the same thing (cf. *Logica*, 1023–1028; 327 fn.). The principle therefore which explains the origin of logical forms and is simply the free, abstracting intelligence, also explains *analytical judgments*.

*Perception* however is a synthetical judgment which, as I have said, can also be rightly called *a priori* (cf. *NE*, 1: 356–360; 260).

*Synthetical judgments* are of three kinds: 1. perceptions, 2. judgments which indicate the relationships between many subjects, and 3. judgments in which the mind applies a dialectical form to an object to which the form is not proper. In synthetical judgments of the first kind the predicate that is added is taken from real feeling; in the second kind, from the order of being manifested to the mind when this has many concepts before it; and in the third kind, the predicate is produced by free intelligence.

Finally, analytical judgment is confused with synthetical judgment. For example, when I say, 'This horse is white' (cf. *NE*, 1: 344), I readily think I am making a synthetical judgment because white is not contained in the essence of a horse. But the subject of the proposition is not *horse* but 'this horse', and because the subject is this determined horse, it also contains the

quality of whiteness I predicate of it. But let us look at the perception itself of the white horse. I see for the very first time a white horse pass before me. Before this perception, I did not know that there were white horses; the only concept I had was the concept 'horse'. The perception of a white horse now allows me however to add the accident of whiteness to my concept 'horse' and thus form the synthetical judgment, 'A horse can also be white'.

We see therefore that perception is necessary if *subjectivity* is to be predicated of ens and being with a *synthetical judgment*.

But perception is always of real entities. Hence, subjectivity predicated of initial being and abstract ens with a *synthetical judgment* is always a *real terminative essence*, the fourth of predicables classified according to what they include (cf. *Logica*, 416).

1239. Here we must recall the various synthetical judgments made in and at the time of perceptions.

In our first perceptions we predicate *reality* of *initial being*, of which we have a permanent intuition. In this perceived reality we see the completion of initial being and simultaneously form the concept of that real ens, acquiring the persuasion of its subsistence (cf. *Logica*, 328–336).

This concept of a real ens however is still not an *abstract ens* but an ens in the *full species*. Let us suppose we perceive many entia that have various accidents but all belong to the same abstract species. Our mind acquires many *full species*. Because these are all equal in the characteristics that constitute the *abstract species*, we will abstract (granted the right conditions) the *abstract species* from them. Hence, whenever an ens of that species presents itself to our feeling, and has a new accident which we have never perceived, we will be able to make a new synthetical judgment when we perceive it. The subject of this judgment will not be initial being but the ens in the abstract species, as happens precisely in the example of the white horse seen for the first time by someone who already has the concept of horse. The predicate will be the accident of whiteness, which pertains to the third class of predicables classified according to what they include.

But if, after acquiring concepts of many abstract species, we extract a genus from them, then in our minds we will have an

ens in the generic species. Consequently, whenever we perceive an ens pertaining to a new species of the genus, we can make a new synthetical judgment in which the subject will be the generic not the abstract ens, and the predicate will be the *differential essence* pertaining to the first of the four predicables classified according to what they include. Finally if, after acquiring many generic concepts, we abstract the *ens* from them, every new real ens we perceive can be referred to the *abstract ens* taken as subject. Thus we can predicate the perceived reality of the abstract ens and say, for example: 'The ens exists in this way.'

Anyone therefore who already has the concept of *abstract ens* can predicate of it every determined reality that he perceives. Anyone who has the concept of *generic ens*, can predicate of it the reality he perceive, provided the reality belongs to that genus. Anyone who has the abstract specific concept of an ens, can predicate of it the reality he perceives, provided the reality belongs to that species. But anyone who does not have in his mind any abstract species, as in the case of a new-born baby, cannot predicate the reality he perceives except solely of *initial being*, with which the full species are formed. All these judgments made in or at the time of perception are *synthetical judgments*.<sup>15</sup>

1240. From what has been said we can see that *subjectivity* can be understood in two senses: 1. a *most common sense*, which pertains to every proposition in which subjectivity is predicated of any subject whatsoever and by means of any judgment whatsoever, whether analytical or synthetical, and 2. a less common sense.

<sup>15</sup> When the mind meditates on a particular *concept* and ignores everything outside the concept, we can ask whether, when it discovers a *property* it did not see before, it makes a synthetical judgment. I do not think so because what the mind sees as new in the concept without going outside it, was already contained in it. This operation reduces therefore to an analysis of the subject. On the other hand, the judgments in which the mind finds new *relationships* among the many concepts it has are synthetical because only the comparison of one concept with another, not the analysis alone of each, can find these relationships. This is the case whenever new consequences are drawn from a principle: the consequences cannot be drawn from an isolated principle, but they must be used to accept other data to which to apply the principle.

Hence four supreme genera of subjectivity:

1. *Undetermined* or most common *subjectivity*.
2. *Formal subjectivity*, which is the pure form of subjectivity.
3. *Incomplete, real subjectivity*.
4. *Complete, real subjectivity*.

1241. Undetermined subjectivity is the concept of subjectivity predicated of everything that the mind conceives as a subject. Because this subject is undetermined, the subjectivity will sometimes pertain to the second genus and will be pure form, sometimes to the third genus and will be incomplete, real subjectivity, and sometimes it will pertain to the fourth genus and be complete, real subjectivity. Common subjectivity is therefore the concept which, when predicated, becomes all the other concepts and yet is none of them but is the virtuality of them all.

1242. Formal subjectivity is the pure form of subjectivity. When predicated with a synthetical judgment it takes the form of dialectical subject. It is predicated when the subject of which it is predicated is not in itself a subject nor has the form of subject. Hence, to predicate the *pure form of subject* means 'to vest with the form of subject an entity which is not a subject nor has this form'. This vesting is accomplished by a *synthetical judgment*, because a dialectical form is joined to an entity so that the dialectical form is container and the entity is content. The container gives the *name* to the object and takes the place of a defined object in the definition.

Entities vested by the mind with the pure form of subject are all those that do not yet have this form before the mind. I prescind here from objects which, having this form, can be further vested with it. The following are entities that do not have the form of subject and are not subjects:

1. the ens as pure object,
2. the act abstracted from its principle and its term,
3. the terminative essence,
4. the corporeal real.

In fact in propositions in which one of these four entities appears as a subject, the subject of the proposition is purely a non-subject vested by the mind with the pure form of subject.

The fourth of these entities, that is, the corporeal real, deserves special attention because it is among the most obscure

in what is humanly knowable. The corporeal real, taken by itself devoid of all animation, is neither an ens nor a subject. We can speak about it in two ways, either by leaving it precisely as it is or by vesting it first with the dialectical form of entity. In this last case it appears before thought as an ens. In both ways it is the *subject* under discussion and therefore vested by the mind with the dialectical form of subject by a synthetical judgment. In perception it is vested with the form of ens, and once perceived, some propositions can be made of which it is the subject. In these propositions the subject is the corporeal real vested with the form of ens and then further vested with the dialectical form of subject. But subsequent abstraction can remove the form of ens, and something can be said about it in this reduced state, in which case it enters into the discussion vested solely with the form of subject without the form of ens.

Subjectivity, as a pure form of subject, is also predicated by an analytical judgment

1. of itself (an identical judgment),
2. of the pure subject, which is itself when it has already been predicated and is no longer in the form of predicable,
3. of all that has been first vested with the form of subject by a synthetical judgment.

1243. *Incomplete, real subjectivity*, when predicated of initial being vested with the dialectical form of subject, is animal feeling without intelligence. We need to see how it can be said that 'animality is *incomplete, real subjectivity*'. The subject is 'that which in an ens is conceived as first, as container and cause of unity'.

All conceivable realities reduce to two genera: those that have the nature of principle and those that have the nature of term (*PSY*, 2: 830–839). Corporeal matter has the pure nature of term. We cannot think in any way that it is 'a first, a container and cause of unity'. Hence we cannot think that it is a subject. If we speak of it as a subject, this is simply because we vest it with this dialectical form which we apply to it but is not proper to it.

In the animal, however, there is a principle which has matter for its term, and this principle, because present, can be thought as a subject, that is, as 'a first, a container and cause of unity'. Nevertheless, this subject is incomplete for the reason I gave in the previous book [2: 865], that the sensitive principle cannot

exist unless there is an intellectual principle either united to it or separate from it. It lacks consciousness of its own existence, knows nothing of itself or even that it exists; it is as if it were not to itself. Hence, because it is, but not to itself, it is a first, relative to the person thinking it but not to itself because relative to itself it is nothing. We have to consider it by separating from every mind considering it and is something not pertaining to its nature. If we consider it in its own nature cut off from every foreign entity, we see that no 'self' exists in it. A principle therefore which is not 'self' is not in itself a principle because it does not exist to itself — it is not *in se* 'a principle' but the term of a 'self' foreign to it. Consequently, the full nature of subject does not pertain to it but only an incomplete nature of subject relative to corporeal matter, its term.

This incomplete subjectivity is predicated of *initial being* 1. by means of a *synthetical judgment*, whenever we think an irrational animal as an ens and reason about it, and also whenever we speak about animal feeling, which is an abstraction drawn from the ens, and 2. by means of an *analytical judgment* whenever an animal, formed already as a subject by a synthetical judgment, is taken as the subject of a proposition, for example the proposition: 'The animal is an incomplete subject', where 'animal' means the animal ens or animal subject (cf. *Logica*, 334–335).

1244. *Complete, real subjectivity* pertains to the *subject complete in itself*, that is, the intelligent real principle. It is predicated of initial being with a *synthetical judgment*, and predicated of the subsistent subject complete in itself with an analytical judgment.

In the case of synthetical judgment, predication of finite subjectivity differs greatly from predication of infinite subjectivity. If finite subjectivity is predicated of initial being as an antecedent subject, there is an essential difference between the subject and the predicate because finite subjectivity is not the essence of being. But if infinite subjectivity is predicated of initial being there is no essential difference between the predicate and the subject, only a difference posited by the mind's abstraction. In fact, *infinite subjectivity* contains the essence of initial being with, in addition, terminative essence. Hence, this judgment is a *judgment lying between* the genus of analytical judgments and



the genus of synthetical judgments. In it, initial being is predicated of initial being indivisible from infinite subjectivity — such a judgment is an *identical analytical judgment*. But in addition to the predication of initial being, the form of subjectivity is also predicated — this is a synthetical judgment. And if *virtual being*, not *initial being*, is taken as the subject of the judgment, the judgment is purely analytical because what is predicated is what is already contained in the subject, even if only virtually.

Hence, whenever the predicate of the judgment contains everything in the subject plus something extra, we have a third genus of *judgments in between analytical and synthetical judgments*, which we can call *analytical-synthetical judgments*.

#### §4. Objectivity

1245. Everything we think has necessarily the form of object. But everything, whatever mode it is in, is thinkable. Therefore objectivity is a most universal form containing all things, whatever mode they are in.

We have seen that a subject is not complete unless it is intelligent. If therefore intelligence does not exist without an object, there can be no complete subject if there is no object, nor can there be an object without a subject thinking it, because the object is the universal form of all thinkable things. These forms are therefore co-relative and synthesising.

Hence, if we grant that a mind exists, we must also grant that an object exists. And if we grant that a necessary mind exists, we must also grant that a necessary object exists.

I have said that in the *object* an *entity* is always thought. Thus, if there is the object, there is the thought entity, and if the object is necessary, the entity thought in it must also be necessary.

I have also said that objects can be divided into two kinds: 1. abstract objects, produced by *free intelligence*, and 2. complete objects, which are objects of *necessary intelligence*. There must be therefore two corresponding kinds of entity: abstract entities that are thought in abstract objects, and complete entia, thought in complete objects.

Abstract objects are clearly not sufficient for the existence of a mind, because:

1. If they were all abstract and because they are free productions of the mind, the mind would be able to produce or not produce them. If it did not produce them, no object would exist and consequently no mind would exist.

2. The mind cannot freely produce any objects for itself unless it itself already exists. But if the only objects were those freely produced by the mind, the mind could not produce them because it would not exist prior to producing them.

3. The mind freely produces objects for itself through the operation of abstraction. But abstraction presupposes an object on which this operation is carried out.

Hence, a necessary condition for the existence of a mind is the existence of a complete object, which can contain a complete ens. In the case of a necessary mind, its object must be first and necessary and contain a necessary, complete ens.

But if a necessary Mind exists that has a necessary object and in this object thinks a necessary, complete ens, this necessary, absolute ens must, through absolute necessity, not only be vested with the form of objectivity, but must itself be a subsistent object. In regard to the pure form of objectivity, it cannot, as an *abstract*, constitute a necessary, first object, which a mind needs; it can only constitute an object freely produced by the mind, that is, an object posterior to the necessary object.

Hence, if a necessary mind exists, a necessary ens must also exist. This ens is also object and in it the nature of ens cannot be distinguished from the nature of object; it is a *per se object ens*.

If on the other hand we suppose that the mind we are discussing is infinite, the *per se* object ens in which the act of the intelligence necessarily terminates must also be infinite and therefore be the best, maximum ens. If this ens, constituting the necessary object of an infinite mind, were not infinite, everything freely known by this intelligence could never give the intelligence an infinite knowledge because it draws all its knowledge by abstraction from its necessary object and not from elsewhere. This mind therefore would not be infinite because 1. if it is constituted mind solely by the necessary object, and if this object is not infinite, an infinite Mind would be constituted by a finite knowledge, which is absurd; 2. the mind could never acquire an

infinite knowledge by free acts, because the objects of these acts are simply fragments of the necessary object.<sup>16</sup>

Consequently, there must be in God an infinite, *per se* object ens, and this must be God himself (there cannot be another infinite ens). This object ens, if considered as *affirmed* by the divine mind, is called divine Word.

The ancients never discovered this rational demonstration of the existence of the divine Word because their minds were not aided, as ours are, by divine revelation.

1246. Only an identical, analytical judgment can predicate objectivity of the subsistent object.

We must therefore distinguish two concepts of the object: the concept of the *subsistent, complete object* and the concept of the *abstract object* from which subsistence has been removed by abstraction.

The *subsistent, complete object* is the first object which constitutes the divine mind. The *object abstracted* from the subsistence is, relative to God, a posterior object of freely operating intelligence. Relative to human beings, however, it is the *first object* whose *entity* is *undetermined being*, which informs and constitutes the human mind.

The *terminative form* of objectivity is this second abstract object in its relationship of *predicable* and not yet predicated.

<sup>16</sup> We see here the origin of Aristotle's error: he denied to God knowledge of the World. 'An excellent intelligence,' he said, 'must have an excellent object. The intelligence is itself the excellent object. Therefore it cannot know anything outside itself.' From this he deduced that 'God cannot know the things of this World because they are not excellent objects' (*Metaphysics*, 12: 7).

Clearly, Aristotle did not know that intelligence acts in two ways, one necessary and the other free. Therefore it has a double object: a first object, which constitutes it and is necessary to it, and an object proper to its free operation. When the first object is in an excellent Mind, that is, in God, it cannot but be excellent, that is, be itself. The second object need not be excellent when considered separate from the first but is precisely as the intelligence freely produces it. The act with which it produces it is always excellent and undivided from the necessary act. Because this second object is produced by free intelligence by means of abstraction, it is contained and known by intelligence in the first object. Hence, God does not need to know anything anywhere else except in himself. Thus, Aristotelian sophistry collapses.

The human mind predicates objectivity of all the entities which can occur in its thought, whether these are abstract or concrete. They reduce to four kinds:

1. undetermined being,
2. absolute being,
3. abstract entities,
4. the finite real.

1247. Because *undetermined being* is itself *object*, its objectivity is predicated by an identical analytical judgment.

However, if we distinguish the *entity* from the *object* — the entity is seen in the object — the mind can direct itself to the entity, while prescinding from the object. Because the mind directs itself in this way, *undetermined being* can be called the *principium quod*, as the Scholastics call it, or *term of intellection*. Its *objectivity* can be called *principium quo* or means of knowledge, or also *idea*. Thus, when the mind directs and restricts its gaze to the *entity* contained in an *idea*, we say that it does not know the idea, although it has a virtual knowledge of it. Hence, strictly speaking, the innate light of the human mind is not *idea* but *undetermined being*. Only with reflection does the philosopher find that that being is *object*, that is, *idea*. This objectivity therefore is predicated of undetermined being not as something separate from undetermined being but as its form. The judgment made with this predication is therefore *analytical*. Although the judgment adds something to the pure entity of undetermined being, the thing added is not found outside undetermined being. If our consideration concerns only undetermined being, we see that it is essentially vested with the form of objectivity.

1248. Absolute Being subsists in three forms: Subject, Object and Holy. When we speak about Subject absolute Being and Holy absolute Being, distinct from Object absolute Being, they are taken as objects of our mind, and with reflection this objectivity can be predicated of them. But the entity involved here is a *means of understanding*, not a *term of intellection*. For this reason the objectivity is not composed of Subject absolute Being and Holy absolute Being as these are *in se* but in so far as they are objects of our mind that actually contemplates them.

Here therefore the distinction between two ways of

predicating *objectivity* presents itself: 1. it can be predicated of a subject with the meaning that objectivity is one of the subject's properties or elements; or 2. it can be predicated of a subject in order to make the subject thinkable without the meaning that the subject has objectivity *in se* as one of its properties or elements. In the first way, objectivity is taken as a term-subject of intellection; in the second, it is taken as a simple means of knowing the term-subject of intellection. Thus, when Subject absolute Being and Holy absolute Being are considered as objects with which the mind is concerned, objectivity does not enter into their composition; they are acknowledged in the objectivity which contains them, but this objectivity is not a term of thought. In other words, the *objectivity* here is a form of thought, not of the entity thought; it constitutes the relationship between the thinker and the thing thought, and is an in-between essence distinct from both.

1248a. When objectivity is predicated of Object absolute Being, the objectivity is acknowledged in the subject as a term of intellection, and the form is restored to it that was taken from it by a theosophical abstraction. This is a *non-identical analytical* judgment because there is more in the subject than in the predicate, although the predicate is eminently included in the subject.

However, the form of objectivity as pure predicable undergoes a change of meaning when predicated of the absolute Object, because the absolute Object contains not only more than the abstract form of objectivity but this 'more', contained in the object, is also *per se* object. Objectivity is predicated of it, where objectivity is not understood as pure *form* but as *undetermined form* that receives different meanings from the subject of which it is predicated. Hence, just as we have distinguished between a *subjectivity as undetermined form* and a *purely formal subjectivity*, we must also distinguish on the one hand an objectivity as *undetermined form* determinable by the subject of which it is [predicated], and on the other an objectivity as pure form, which always keeps the condition of form, no matter what subject it is predicated of.

When objectivity is predicated of the absolute Object, it is understood as predicated of it in the first way. Hence subjectivity acquires, through its union with such a subject, a meaning it

does not have as pure form because the meaning is 'the objectivity which is in the subject', and this objectivity is absolute, infinite, first, essential; it is no longer objectivity, nor object as a predicate distinguishable from the subject, but pure subsistent object, not predicable as such and not predicated. Thus, only when undetermined objectivity is determined by predication in this way, is the subject the absolute Object, because the objectivity remains *pure form* relative to all other things.

As pure form, it can be considered united to a subject in the two above-mentioned ways, that is, as a term of intellection and as a means of knowledge and a form of thought. Consequently, *objectivity* admits three concepts:

1. Undetermined objectivity.

2. A pure form of thought, which is united to the term of intellection solely as a means of knowledge, and applies to every entity seen by intuition. It can then be predicated of all *known* entities, including the absolute Object.

3. A pure form of the subject, which is a term of intellection.

If, instead of taking *objective absolute Being* as subject of a predication, we take purely *absolute Being*, then *undetermined subjectivity* is still predicated of absolute Being by an analytical judgment, because the predicate is virtually present in the subject. The undetermined subjectivity becomes determined after it has been predicated through its union with the subject.

1249. Relative to abstract entities, objectivity as *pure form of the subject* is predicated of both the *abstract object* and the *objectivity* itself by an *identical-analytical judgment*.

Objectivity as pure form of the subject is predicated of other entities by an analytical but not identical judgment, because their objectivity is found by a new reflection carried out solely on them.

1250. The mind unites objectivity to the finite real in the following way. Present to its intuition is the object, that is, *undetermined being*. It also has feeling and the felt element, that is, the *real*. If this real is not a subject, as in the case of corporeal matter, the mind gives it dialectical subjective form (the mind has this in the object), and thus completes the *subjective ens*. But it does this in the object, which it uses as a *means of knowledge*,

without predicating expressly the objectivity of the real, term of the intellection. With a later reflection, the mind notes that this real subject is the object of its mind and predicates this objectivity of it. It next notes that this objectivity is an absolute form which can exist even without the real, although the real cannot exist without it. Hence, the predication of the objectivity as pure form, term of intellection, is not carried out on the *pure real* but on the real as thought by the mind and vested with objectivity as form, the *means of knowledge*.

If however the real is a complete subject, the form of subjectivity is distinguished from it only by a subsequent analytical judgment. On the other hand the real that is an *incomplete subject* is understood only subsequent to the real that is a complete subject. Its concept is produced by abstraction, that is, by abstracting intelligence from the complete subject and leaving the subject with the sensitive principle.

### §5. Morality

1251. Morality is a terminative essence appropriate solely to the ens that is a complete or intelligent subject.

But its appropriateness to the infinite Intelligent differs from its appropriateness to the finite intelligent.

Only that Ens that is *per se* subsistent Object can be essentially Holy. Morality, which consists in the full and absolute *acknowledgement of being, known* in the object, results from three elements: 1. the intelligent subject that acknowledges being in the object; 2. acknowledged being, and 3. the object in which being is acknowledged. If the acknowledging subject is not simultaneously being and object but receives these from outside and does not have them *per se*, then it is *per se* neither intelligent nor moral but receives from elsewhere both intelligence constituted by the intuition of the object, and morality constituted by the being it sees in the object. In contrast, infinite Ens, as most actual, absolute Being, is simultaneously subject and object. Consequently, without exiting from its nature and without its nature receiving anything from elsewhere, the three elements of morality are found in its nature. And because infinite Ens is most actual, the acknowledgement of itself-being

in the object is also *in se* most actual. Infinite Being therefore must be Holy through its very essence.

In so far as Being that is acknowledged and infinitely loved is loved by itself-subject that exists identical in the object, we conceive a procession of the loving object from the loving subject existent *in se* and existent identical in the object. This procession is, in theological language, called procession, and when through its perfection it communicates the subject to the object as loved, it is called person, commonly called *Holy Spirit*.

This rational demonstration of the existence of the Holy Spirit could not have been carried out if the human mind had not been helped by divine Providence.

God is therefore simultaneously principle and term of the subsistent Holy, that is, subject and being in the object. He is therefore also a subsistent Holy because we are dealing with a most actual principle and term. Man is only a subject, and the being in the object is not himself but another being that is shown to him, and shown only initially, not completely. Consequently, the subject also is united to this initial being through an initial act that constitutes the subject, and is also in potency to *knowing* being more deeply and to *acknowledging* it (moral and rational potency).

1252. This analysis demonstrates that in the concept of morality two distinct things are presented to us according to our nature: the acknowledging subject and the being acknowledged in the object as another. In God this complete, acknowledged, loved Being is himself, a complete subject, that is, a person. In us, however, where only initial being is involved, this being, lacking a subject (cf. *Logica*, 334), is, through divine abstraction, *impersonal*. It is certainly true that later we acquire knowledge of the existence of persons, that is, of ourselves and other finite, intelligent entia, but these are not being, and hence are not persons who are essentially holy. In us therefore the terminative essence of morality is divided into two series:

1. The first series consists of *impersonal moral essences*. Of this kind are objects that they manifest a moral exigency, a moral loveliness. When formulated, they are called *moral laws*, and when applied to the subject, *duties*.

2. The second series consists of *personal moral essences*. These are all those *acts* and *habits* through which the



man-subject obeys the moral exigencies of objects, that is, conforms himself to laws and fulfils his duties. These acts or habits perfect the man-subject morally, who becomes *moral* by participation in and adhesion to another.

When we eventually know, either through divine revelation or through reasoning (which revelation elevates), that the *being*, present to us as impersonal and as the pure object of intuition, subsists personally, we see that it is not only impersonally *lov-able* but is itself essentially actual love. Therefore, what for us is *impersonal moral essence* is not so *in se*; it is a divine abstraction of a *personal moral essence*.

1253. However, in the human mind, the two series of *moral essences* do not totally cease, because our mind still distinguishes between the *subject* and the *term*. The *subject*, which acknowledges and infinitely loves itself as absolute being, is, through this *act*, holy. The *term* of the act, the same being as loved, is, through the infinite perfection of the act of being, constituted consummatively a living and loving person. Supernatural theology, by means of an abstractive distinction, distinguishes between the moral essence present in the pure, objective *act* of the subject and the moral essence present in the consummate *term* of the act. It calls the first moral essence 'essential Holiness of God', and the second, 'personal Holiness of God'. The first is the *Holiness of the subject as loving*, and the subject is identical in all three divine persons; the second is the *Holiness of the subject* (also identical in all three divine persons) but as *loved* and, as such, unique.

This distinction however, presented to the mind by abstraction, is not in God considered *in se*. The *act* of the *loving subject*, always finalised and existing in its final consummate state, is totally and always term. In fact, although in human operations, the beginning, progress and finish of an act are distinguished because these are a transition from potency to actuality, in God however, the beginning and finish, without any progress, are the same totally simple, subsistent act. Consequently, the act is the term of itself and only the mind's abstraction considers the act subsistent and living, or in relationship to its principle. In this relationship the mind calls the act *spiration* or, because it exists personally in itself, *Holy Spirit*.

Nevertheless, the products of abstraction are not false if

correctly interpreted. Although it makes many things out of a thing that *in se* is one, each of the many things, called abstract elements, is effectively present in the one thing on which the abstraction was carried out. But in fact the one thing is not divided (this division and separation results from the abstracts falling short of the truth), but unified with the rest. Moreover, whenever this unification is essential to the whole, it causes the loss of the identity of objects. Hence we cannot say that the mind can know how the thing *actually* [is], but we can say it can *virtually* know the thing. Here 'virtually' means that 'the object of the mind's speculation contains *virtually* the elements the mind finds through abstraction.' This virtuality, far from being defective, is a supreme endowment of *all* perfect things, because 'by means of abstraction, the *mind* can divide a given totality into many *elements*, to each of which some perfection corresponds in the totality. But this perfection is united with all the other perfections so that through the union the perfection becomes a much greater perfection in degree, kind and nature'. Many objects therefore correspond to one single object, but this single object exceeds in value all the others because of the most perfect mode, unattainable by human thought, in which it unifies them in itself.

1254. In the case of the moral essence that applies to the human being, I said that it is double: it is either a *pure impersonal, objective moral essence* or a *subjective form which perfects the human being as subject*. The first is called *moral law* and is used for the propositions that express moral obligations, that is, duties. The second consists of *moral virtues* and *virtuous acts*. These are predicated of the *human being as subject* in whom morality subsists as an accident of perfection.

## SECTION SIX

### CAUSES

#### [Introduction]

1255. After discussing these matters, we can return with greater hope of success to the problem of the multiplicity of entia, and complete the treatise on it with which the whole of ontology is concerned.

In the previous book I showed how being is [one] in both its infinite and finite terms and, as one, gives unity to these terms. As a result I could present the *System of dialectical unity* and thus satisfy the first inevitable tendency of human intelligence to reduce all multiplicity to unity. In the present book I wanted to demonstrate the opposite, that is, how the three terms of being are in identical being and give it a certain trinity, and how all the multiplicity of finite entia proceed from this trinity. This brought me to the *System of real multiplicity*. This system satisfies the second inevitable tendency of human intelligence, which cannot stop at simple one nor ever be persuaded that an infinite ens and a finite ens are one single ens.

Because of these two tendencies the human mind has two intellective movements: it continually moves from the multiplicity of things it sees before it to a first unity, and continually moves in the opposite direction, from unity to multiplicity. But this alternation or also contemporaneous movement of thought (like two electrical waves which, starting from opposite ends of the same wire, pass along it without obstructing or disturbing

each other) does not give the same result: the movement towards unity finishes in a purely dialectical unity, while the movement towards multiplicity ends in a real multiplicity.

Real multiplicity is certainly and in the first instance rooted and founded in God, even though God is a unique ens, one and most simple. I have shown that we could not conceive and mentally grasp God with a philosophical thought, without making him an ens full of absurdities, if he were conceived as one ens in such a way that he is not simultaneously three in his modes and, strictly speaking, in persons. This trinity of persons is also clearly seen by the enquiring mind as necessary to explain how God could be the cause of the world, because without this trinity the very concept of cause would be a concept involving insuperable contradictions.

There is therefore a double *real multiplicity*: the first is in God and constitutes a plurality of persons but not of entia; the second, which takes its origin from the first, from the divine trinity, is in the world and is a plurality of relative entia.

I will speak briefly about the plurality of the divine persons, intending to deal with this argument more extensively in theology. I will search in this plurality of persons for the first origin of all *causes*. I will discuss causes in general, and finally deal with the plurality of the effects produced by these causes, effects that include the many finite entia that compose the universe.

## CHAPTER 1

### Multiplicity in God

#### Article 1

The double multiplicity we conceive in God: one is dialectical,  
the other truly exists in him

1256. We conceive a double multiplicity in God: a *dialectical multiplicity*, which is not in him but in our concepts that we attribute to him, and a *multiplicity* that is truly *in him* independent of our concepts; this multiplicity is the trinity of the *divine persons*.

These two kinds of multiplicity must be discussed together. We cannot reason about God without making use of a multiplicity of concepts and words, but when the essences contained in these concepts and indicated by the words are considered in God, they become one essence; they no longer retain the multiplicity they had when considered solely in concepts not yet attributed to God. We must also do the same when we describe the order of the divine persons who have a multiplicity truly in God, not merely in our concepts.

I will therefore attempt to give a notion of the divine persons that we, as human beings, can grasp and will note at every step the dialectical multiplicity of concepts I am forced to use in this kind of reasoning.

#### Article 2

The trinity of divine persons is described by their  
relationships of origin

1257. As a result of what has been said, God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and nothing other than this.

The only way we can form the concept of God the Father is to conceive him as an infinite *act* of intelligence, which as an absolute and totally first act is simultaneously *subject*.

This infinite act of intelligence is *pure being*. For us, *intelligence* and *being* are two separate concepts containing two separate essences. How then do they express one essence when applied to God? We must note that *being*, intuited naturally by us, is virtual and that we do not see its finalised act. This finalised act, proper to being and not seen by us, is absolute intelligence. The fact that we distinguish the concept of being from that of intelligence is solely because our concept of being is imperfect; we cannot intuit being totally but only in an undetermined, virtual mode. We can therefore understand that if we were to see being in its fullest actuation, we would see that its *nature* was precisely intelligence. The fact that we give God these two concepts of *being* and *intellective act* does not mean that the essences they express are two in God — the duality is simply dialectical.

This conception of God the Father makes us understand that he is intellective, most pure, *infinite act*. But even this concept of *act* must not be thought as something truly different and distinct from being and intelligence; it is being and intelligence. The fact that we distinguish these three concepts or essences is again a result of our imperfect conception of finite entia: we see the essences as separate and, by means of abstraction, extract them. Similarly, our concept of act is also abstract and therefore virtual and undetermined. When we apply it to God, seeing the act in him, the act becomes most actual, most determined and most absolute. Conceived like this, it is identical with most actualised being and with most finalised intelligence.

In God the Father therefore we have the first *act*, which [is] essential *being* and essential *intelligence*.

1258. This absolute act of totally complete intelligence, which is simultaneously subject, has its own self, absolute being, as object. But the intellective act would not be absolute and totally complete if it did not produce its object. This object can be only itself, absolute being and subject. Hence, the intellective act, unable to produce another being because being is one, and there is nothing outside it, produces or proffers this subject-being *as object*, and thus another person exists who takes origin from the first. This second person has the essence of the first who is absolute subject-being, but in another mode, that is, an objective

mode, *per se* manifest, *per se* understood, and has in itself the life and subjectivity of the first mode.

In addition, if an intelligent entity which being is, understands itself, it must generate itself, because to understand is an act of being, and everything it understands must also be as something understood.<sup>17</sup>

This is the absolutely first act, principle and cause of all acts; it is the *fatherhood* 'from whom,' as St. Paul said, 'every fatherhood, in heaven or on earth, takes its name.'<sup>18</sup> For human beings, 'fatherhood' expresses the principle and the fullest, total cause because, as St. Thomas says, *paternitas est tantum in viventibus et cognoscentibus* [fatherhood is only in things that live and know].<sup>19</sup> In God this fatherhood is in absolute mode, different from the mode in which it is in finite entia, which have only an analogy with what is in God.

This first principle therefore virtually contains within itself all the genera of principles and causes: in so far as it is *first*, they derive from it in their reality in the way I will explain; and in so far as it is *total*, they can all be abstracted from it by means of theosophical abstraction.

1259. But this principle does not stop and end its act in the object *generated* as person; it continues its production in and with this object, finalising itself, because the intellective act, which is the essence of actual, absolute being, is infinite and perfect. It is therefore intellective, practical, willed, pleasant, loving. Hence, it does not produce the person-object simply as intelligible but also produces it as infinitely lovable, loved and loving, because this is the nature of the absolute being communicating itself. Now, the intelligent subject, communicated to the understood object (which is therefore also a living, intelligent person), is, in so far as given, in another mode, that is, in the objective mode. This subject in the two

<sup>17</sup> Hence, St. Thomas says: 'The nature of God is to understand being. Thus, its generation or intellectual conception is the generation or conception of its nature. In us, however, intelligible conception is not conception of our nature because in us understanding and our nature are not the same thing'\* (*In Ep. ad Coloss.*, c. 1, lect. 4).

<sup>18</sup> Eph 3: 15.

<sup>19</sup> *In Ep. ad Eph.*, c. 3, lect. 4.

modes loves the common, supremely lovable, absolute being which is supremely lovable with an infinite love. This love would not be infinite if it were not being itself and subject, but in a third mode, which is the mode of being loved *per se* in act, and to be loved *per se* means also to be a loving, subsistent act. Hence, there is necessarily a third person, equal and co-eternal to the first two who with one act of pleasure spirate him; they are one subject-being in two modes. Thus, the same subject-being is in a third mode or form called moral or holy. To understand this and avoid misunderstanding we must recall the teaching [concerning the difference] between the meaning of 'subject' and 'person', explained in *Anthropology* (AMS, 771–864). This tells us that the divine subject is common to the other persons, although these are truly distinct in themselves.

In this way, the principle from which all principles and causes come is reduced to perfect unity; the efficient, intellectual act which is absolute being, God, is one and constitutes three persons. These persons are distinguished from each other solely through processions and relationships, and the processions are the intellectual act. This act of absolute, divine essence has a principle and two terms. Consequently, if the act is considered as *principle* in relationship with the first term, it is and is called 'Father', and the first term is called 'Son'. If the second term is considered in relationship with the act in so far as the act is identical in the Father and Son, it is not called by a proper name but by a common and appropriate name 'Holy Spirit'. But if the act alone is considered, without any attention to the relationships and therefore abstractly, it is called divine essence, which is distinguished only mentally from the persons.

### Article 3

The dialectical distinction between the concepts *being, act, subject, volitive intellection, production*; their theosophical deduction

1260. In describing the procession of the three divine persons, I used many concepts, principally those of *being, act,*

[1260]



*intellection* (volitive intellection, that is, volition) and production. I took all these concepts from finite ens, which comes within our experience, where they are truly distinct. I used abstraction to extract from finite ens different concepts and therefore different essences. But all these abstract essences lack their ultimate act of realisation. When we seek their ultimate act of realisation in God and not in finite entia, they lose their multiplicity. The ultimate act of realisation is identical for all of them, so that when realised and terminated they become only one real essence, which we do not see but understand must be one. Thus, in God they lose the dialectical multiplicity which they have in finite entities and in the abstract form in which our mind considers them.

As I said, this *one essence* in which these abstract essences are realised remains unknown to us, although we know it must be there. With this knowledge we logically infer that, *granted we could see this essence*, we could carry out an abstraction on it, and this abstraction would restore for us all the distinct concepts. We can therefore call these concepts and the essences known through them *theosophical abstracts*; all the attributes and other concepts applied to God can also be correctly called by the same name. Thus, the *divine essence* (although known only negatively) has, relative to these concepts, the meaning of *everything*, and the concepts can then be understood as *formal dialectical parts* of the divine essence.

But in order to clarify what follows, I must define accurately the dialectical difference between these abstract concepts.

1261. The dialectical difference between the concepts *being* and *act*.

*Being* of course cannot be thought without *act*, nor *act* without *being*. The difference, however, is this: *act* is more universal and common than *being*. Consequently, *act* can be considered as an elementary concept of being (cf. *NE*, 2: 558).

In fact we have seen that finite ens is constituted solely by *what is real*, and that this real is not being, although it is a term of being, which it needs in order to be. Although *finite ens* is not being, it has its own act, of which being is certainly a condition but not its essence. Act is therefore a concept common to both being and the finite terms of being, which through the presence of being are entia. Our concept of *act* was formed by

abstraction carried out on these finite entia. Through this abstraction we found an act prior to and necessary to the entia, the act of being, proper to them. The concept therefore of act can be defined as:

‘Act is everything that *exists* whether as being or as pure term of being, in so far as it exists and in whatever mode it exists.’

This definition of act refers to concepts that are more evident; they are the concepts of *existence*, *being* and *pure* (or finite) *terms* of *being*. *Being* and its *finite terms*, which reduce to finite feeling considered in relationship to being, are the two things known *per se* (AMS, 10–20). Existence is abstraction carried out on these two first noted things and, considered in being, is *existence* proper, but considered in the finite terms, it is existence received from being. Consequently, *act* expresses a concept common to being that is *per se*, and common to the finite terms that are through being.

This example, given us here in the order of natural reason, shows us how the dialectical plurality of concepts can cease when they are applied to certain entia.

In fact, if we take non-terminated *being*, which is naturally known to us, we see that its concept and the concepts of existence and act are different, when they are considered separately. But if we apply the concepts *act* and *existence* to being, the two essences given us by these two concepts become the essence of *being*. Indeed, being, act and existence or essence are not three distinct things in being; being is most simple and is identically and indistinctly being, act and essence or existence. Before these essences are applied or predicated, they are three before the human mind, and this threeness means that they can be thought separately. However, when they are considered as existing in a given entity, they cannot be acknowledged as only one indistinct, most simple essence that is not one of them to the exclusion of the others but is an essence from which by abstraction all three can be extracted and distinguished. Thus, all abstracts indicating some endowment could be extracted from God by theosophical abstraction.

1262. Act is therefore present in both being and finite entia that are not being. From these, of which alone we have experience, we first form the concept of act. Hence, initially and in ordinary thought the concept is not perfect. In ordinary

thought the mind does not rise to the concept of act in all its universality but has present to it the act together with the conditions it has in finite entia, from which the mind abstracted it. Note also: in finite entia the human mind first considers the *transient act* (PSY, 2: 1203–1204), and when it considers the *permanent act*, it does so, not under the concept of act but under the concept of being, of ens, of substance, subject and such like. However, if we reflect more deeply and philosophically, *permanent acts* can be distinguished from *transient acts*. But because the transient concept is our first concept of act, we find it difficult to consider the *permanent act* totally stripped of the characteristics of the transient act.

Furthermore, very often the transient act is not a simple act but a series of tiny acts which follow each other so closely that we do not distinguish them; we see them as one single act which we name according to the total effect that we distinguish. For example, we talk about ‘a passing act’, where the passing itself is a complex of tiny acts and movements. As a result, *act* is popularly conceived as a movement that needs time for its accomplishment or at least includes some succession. Because people accept this characteristic of *successive formation* as a universal, essential characteristic of every act, certain principles are accepted as ontological which are not so and do not apply to all acts; they apply solely to transient acts, which are in fact complex, and simple only in appearance.

1263. One of these principles, and well-known, was: *in actu actus nondum est actus* [an act, while in act, is not yet an act]; in other words, ‘an act which is in the process of formation is not yet an act.’

This principle supposes the following:

1. An act can be present in an instant in which it begins to be formed but not yet totally executed. This can take place only in the kind of acts that are formed by a successive series of instants, or generally whose formation is successive. In this case, although an act is seen as simple, and is simple in its effect or final state, it results in fact from many tiny acts.

2. An act is not an act unless it has terminated its effort to be, that is, has terminated its action. But this kind of expression can mean two things. When an act has finalised the movement that forms it, one of the following happens: if the act is

transient, it has been and is no longer; if something remains, that which remains will be a *permanent* act, in which case it is another act and no longer the act in course of formation, no longer the *actus in actu* [an act in act].

The Aristotelian axiom, therefore, *in actu actus nondum est actus*, is not an ontological principle expressing some property common to all acts. It applies only to those transient acts that have a phenomenal continuity and are in fact a series of smaller acts. I have already shown (*PSY*, 2: 1208–1223) that the concept of a single act that is being formed by a continual *mutation* is one of those popular concepts which give rise to an absurdity (cf. *Logica*, 712). I have also shown that every transient act is formed in an instant, without any duration.

If we substitute the truly ontological principle for this principle of common, popular thought, we will say, ‘An act either is, or is not’, there is nothing in between. The question of the possible connection between many acts does not belong here.

From this principle (‘an act either is, or is not’) we can deduce the following propositions which describe the nature of an act:

1. If an act is or is not, then either it is *being*, or depends on being.

2. If an act is, it must be unchanged for some duration, otherwise it would not be.

3. If an act endures unchanged, it is called a permanent or immanent act.

4. A transient act therefore can be only a concept extracted by abstraction, it can be only the act that is considered as either the first or the final instant of the duration of a permanent act (*PSY*, 2: 1125), in the way that as an instant is the term of a duration, and a point the term of a line, all of which are dialectical entia.

5. Therefore, in the concept of an act the action with which the act is formed is not something distinct from the act; the action with which an act is formed is the act itself. In an act therefore there is no true distinction between ‘is being done’ and ‘is done’; we can say equally that an act is always *being done* during all the time of its duration, and that it always *is done*. It is always done because it is always being done; indeed this ‘being done completely’ is precisely the act itself, because *being done* is the same as *being* — ‘an act is, or is not’. The act’s

*being done* therefore consists in the act of *being*; here again the two abstract concepts *being* and *being done* identify in the act (cf. *Logica*, 322).

1264. We cannot therefore think transient acts without at the same time thinking *permanent* acts. Transient acts are simply the points where permanent acts begin and end, they are separated by the mind through abstraction and are, dialectically considered as acts on their own. However only permanent acts, with their two extremes (start and finish), truly exist *in se*. But start and finish are not involved in the pure concept of act because they are more its limits. Consequently, the essence of act, which does not include limits, presents absolute, immutable and hence eternal permanence. This demonstrates that the essence of act is *being*, which alone excludes limits. If therefore act also receives limits, these do not come from its essence, that is, from being, but from the finite terms of being which, precisely because finite, differ from being. Hence, all limited acts are acts received from the terms, and because terms are not *per se* being, they are also not act. The fact that the concept of act is more extensive than the concept of being does not come from the pure concept of act but from the limitations added to it. Thus the difference between the concepts of being and of act comes down to this: being cannot receive limits but, when it is limited, it loses by this very fact the name 'being'; the concept of *act*, however, although it receives limits in our mind, is still called 'act'. I make this difference in the use of the two words for the following reason. *Being* is given us from the beginning so that we can intuit everything whatsoever, but it is given as idea, which means it is given with the virtuality of its terms. The word 'act' is not needed for naming this being; indeed, for a long time no word is necessary because being is a light that makes known to us the real things of the world. Our attention is focused for a long time on these, not on the light which makes them known — all we have to do is use the light as means of knowledge. The things we first know by direct attention are the real, finite things that compose the world; in other words our first abstractions are carried out on the observation of these finite things and we extract from them the universal notions of *act* and *potency*. But in finite real entities we find nothing more than an *act* already *limited*. We do not distinguish the two

concepts of *act* and *limitation*; we simply give the name 'act' to every limited act, to every act of real things. In fact, the *real*, compared to ideal being, proffers thought of a greater *actuation* so that the *idea* has the *act* of the real enclosed and concealed in virtuality. Only much later does thought consider *being* and see that, although it is ideal and has virtuality, it is also *act*. When this stage is reached, thought compares the *act of the finite real* with the act of *ideal being*, and finds that the latter is an act without limits relative to its extension but that this act without limits of extension reveals itself only as initial and not finalised. The reflecting mind now begins to distinguish pure *act* from its limits and comes to see that a pure act, without limits, can be only *being*, as it must be *in se*. But because the limited act of the finite real is what first strikes thought and we are accustomed to calling it simply 'act', we continue to call it *act*, although limited, whereas the only limitation attributed to *being* is that of virtuality. Hence the title 'being' in its proper, first sense is denied to everything limited. For this reason *being* and *act* were accepted as indicating distinct concepts.

1265. An act, as such, is always permanent but is considered either unlimited, in which case it is pure act, or limited by the limits of ideal extension or its inclusion in the real. Because the acts of finite entia are limited, they can be many and bound closely together. The greatest bond is that by which an act contains and unites many acts; the act containing a finite real ens is its *first* act and is called *subject*. A subject, I said, is that which in an ens is one, first and container. But in infinite ens, where many acts are impossible and everything exists in only one act, this one, and hence first act is the same as the *subject*. Thus the concepts of subject and act in an infinite ens express the same thing, although considered *in se* we take them as two concepts. We do so because we are accustomed to considering act in finite entia where not every act is a subject, but the subject is the bond of many other acts. This happens of course because we are dealing not with pure acts but acts with limits, which are not acts. Consequently, extending the meaning of *act* beyond the meaning of *subject* has no foundation in the essence of act. Hence when the essence indicated by 'subject' and the essence indicated by 'act' are taken on their own, they are the same. Nevertheless, it must be said that the difference between the concept of act and the

concept of subject is the same as the difference between the concepts of act and being, that is, we are always inclined to join the thought of change and transience to the concept of act. Thus it seems strange to call being and subject 'act', like acts that are permanent acts without anything transient.

1266. The mind sees another difference between the concept of *being* and *subject*. But this difference also arises from the limitation in which we consider being. We have seen that the only limitation admitted by being is virtuality. Precisely as a result of this, we see it as a *subject* solely in a dialectical mode. In fact, the word 'subject' pertains to a complete ens, not to being as initiation of an ens. But limitation is never the limited thing. Hence, if we take *being* and leave aside its virtual limitation, which is not being, we will immediately have Being, a complete, terminated ens, and thus think it a true *subject*, a subject which is the same as pure act, that is, it has no limitations. Here again the multiplicity of concepts does not arise from the essences contained in the concepts but from the *limitations* within which we think the essences. These limitations are of two kinds: 1. *virtuality*, for the category of object, and 2, true limitation of the real, for the category of subject. This explains why *being*, *act* and *subject* are all one in infinite Being.

But the two concepts, *act* and *subject*, express *essences* limited both by *real limitation*, because we have extracted the concepts by an abstraction from finite ens, and by *virtual limitation*, because they do not indicate a determined act or subject. When the real limitation was removed, we found that *infinite being*, *act* and *subject* constitute an identical, most simple one. But virtual limitation still remains and is also present in the precise concept of *infinite being*, because this concept alone, resulting from the two abstract concepts of being and infinity, is not sufficient for me to grasp the nature of *infinite being*. I argue that 'if it is infinite, it must be intelligent', which gives me the following three concepts expressing identical, unlimited essence: 'intellective infinite being, intellective infinite act and intellective infinite subject'. I can take any one of these for the other because all of them mean the same essence; any apparent difference is totally external and is the difference the concepts take from limitations.

1267. But we need to see whether infinite being, infinite act

and infinite subject are the same as intellective being, intellective act and intellective subject, bearing in mind that the first concepts are expressed with virtuality, the second without this limitation of virtuality, or rather, with less virtuality. The argument that 'if it is infinite, it must be intelligent' proves that intelligence is virtually contained in the concept of the infinity of being, of act and of subject. If therefore we take virtuality from these three concepts which express the same infinite essence, the result will be *intelligence* which expresses an essence identical to that expressed by the words 'infinite being, infinite act and subject' — intelligence however manifestly expresses this essence, whereas the concepts express it virtually. Also, intelligence pertaining to the real form receives the limits that this form is able to receive, but these limits are a lack of intelligence, not intelligence itself. Thus, pure *intelligence* is without real limits, just as the pure essences of *being*, *subject* and *act* are without limits. Consequently, the essences expressed by these four words, considered purely *in se* and without limits, are identical essence.

1268. Among the limitations that the *intellective act* receives when it is in finite real entities is that which distinguishes the act into speculative and practical intellect. The speculative intellect does not penetrate and appropriate to itself all the content of its object; it stops at the objective form without uniting itself fully to what this form makes known. Hence, this kind of intellective act is not finalised and although it can certainly be sufficient for the knowledge of non finalised and incomplete entia, it is not enough for knowing finalised and complete entia, for example entia that have an intellective and loving life, which consists in pleasure (*PSY*, 2: 1104). In fact, we cannot understand feeling, particularly intellective feeling that is love, if we do not experience it. But because love is an intellective feeling, it can be experienced only with a loving, intellective act. Consequently it is understood solely by means of the loving, intellective act in with it is experienced. Hence, the loving intellective act is a complete intellective act that is also called practical and volitive. It is a single act with two effects: it makes us know and simultaneously love, and each of these cannot be in a perfect mode without the other: there cannot be perfect knowledge of an ens which is *per se* loving and lovable without love of the ens, nor can there be perfect love of the ens without perfect knowledge



of it. Thus, to avoid going round in circles, we must conceive the act as the only act that in so far as having an object is called *intellective*, and in so far as it unites itself through its very activity to the content of this object and has this union as its term is called *volitive*.<sup>20</sup> If we conceive *infinite being* as an *intellective act* and this act as complete, we necessarily find that the act is also *volitive*, so that the two words 'intellective' and 'volitive' indicate in fact the same identical act but in two different respects, that is, relative to two different terms, one of which is *object*, the other *union of tranquil pleasure*. Hence, the concepts contained in the two words *intellective* and *volitive*, although considered pure and without limitations, do not at all indicate the same thing in the same mode (as do the concepts dealt with above of *being*, *act* and *subject*), but indicate the same thing in a different mode: 'intellective' indicates the *infinite act* relative to one of its terms, the object; 'volitive' indicates the same infinite act relative to the second of its terms, the *union of tranquil pleasure*. But if we take the act and prescind from its double relationship to its double term, or if we unite the two relationships and express them as *practical* or *loving intelligence*, we express the *identical* thing that was expressed by the words 'infinite being', 'infinite subject', 'infinite act'.

Hence, the *intellective volitive act*, which in itself is one, unique and most simple, has a virtual doubleness because it terminates in two things, which are the *object* and the *unitive tranquil pleasure*.

1269. We see from all this that being, taken totally as it is in itself, is not dead but living and therefore full of action. We also see that this act is essentially *productive* because it is not in itself in such a way that it is not in something else. It has in fact two terms equal to itself which, as I said, differ only through the relationship of origin. These two terms originate from the infinite, intellective act and are this act in another mode, that is, in the mode of object and of actually beloved or love. But the infinite, intellective act, in so far as originator of the two terms, is a subject in the form of a pure, infinite subject. It can therefore be

<sup>20</sup> Hence, Card. Cajetan correctly said: 'Free choice means the common faculty of the intellect and will, because it means something composed of freedom and choice'\* (*In S. S. Th.*, I, 69, 3).

called essentially *production*, from the Latin *producere*, to bring forward. And in this sense the concept of production is also identified with the first four concepts, if it is considered purely in itself, stripped of all limitations both virtual and real. In fact production that is totally free of limits can be only an infinite act which, operative within itself, generates itself as a perfect and therefore subsistent object, and consumes itself in a perfect and hence subsistent love.

Thus the variety of the four concepts, *being*, *act*, *subject* and *volitive intelligence*, and of *production* is not founded on the concepts themselves, that is, on the essences they make known, but on the limitations added to them, whether the limitations are virtual or real. On the other hand, the identification of the essences in a single essence is obtained by removing all these limitations from the essences and consequently removing the relationships with finite entities and considering the essences in themselves, pure and simple. Thus, the one essence known in the concepts is simultaneously and in the same mode, being, act, subject, volitive intelligence and production.

1270. Someone may object: 'Being is added to finite entities but never becomes finite. In contrast, act, subject, volitive intelligence and production become finite. Hence there must be some intrinsic difference between the concept of being and the other three concepts.'

The four concepts we are discussing are in effect different concepts in finite ens. The difference allows us to explain how they have other laws, and present themselves to our mind with the difference, but it does not follow from this that they are different when considered *in se* as infinite, and therefore as infinite ens. In fact, the fundamental difference between infinite ens and what is finite is that in the Infinite, being and term are an ens that is one, identical and totally simple, whereas in the finite there is only the real term; considered on its own, the finite is not being, and hence being must be added to it for it to exist. Granted this separateness of being, the infinite act, the infinite subject, the infinite volitive intelligence and the infinite production are also separate. Hence, all that remains in finite ens is a finite act, subject, intelligence and production. When these four things are finite, they are distinguished from *being* and pertain to the real term. But when infinite, it does not follow that they

are distinguished from being; they *are* being, because the infinite term is being. The real term separates from being when it becomes finite, in which case the essences contained in the four concepts also separate from the essence of being. From this we conclude only that the four concepts pertain virtually to the infinite term and not to being taken as that term's beginning. But the virtuality that multiplies the essences in infinite ens does not posit in it a true distinction but solely a distinction relative to the way the essences are conceived. In fact, even in the infinite, a distinction can be made by a mental abstraction: we can distinguish between the term and the principle of ens. It was by such an abstraction that God thought and created the finite. Hence, the four essences do not have in themselves something distinct from the essence of being, but receive something distinct by the separation (whether virtual or abstract) of the term from the principle of being, and by the separation of the finite term. Through finiteness, the term now becomes another term and is no longer the real term it was before.

#### Article 4

The concepts, *activity*, *principle*, *cause* and *potency*, and whether and in what way they are suitable for God

1271. The thing that thought finds difficult in the concept of cause (hence even cause was denied by some philosophers) is an antinomy it presents to dialectical investigation. The antinomy can be expressed as follows:

‘An ens exists totally *in se* and is essentially one. Hence, all its activity, through which it exists, must be conserved within it. The concept of cause however supposes that the activity of an ens passes outside the ens because the *effect* produced by a cause is something else, which has neither unity nor identity with the cause. Thus, there is an antinomy between the concept of ens and the concept of cause. An ens cannot therefore be a cause of another ens. If an ens cannot be a cause, cause does not exist; it is a false concept because a non-ens cannot exist *in se*.’

To answer this argument the antinomy must be resolved and the concept of ens reconciled with that of cause. We must

analyse and describe with the greatest accuracy similar concepts and concepts that must be assumed in the argument. I began this task in the previous chapter where I acknowledged that the concept of being, stripped of the limitations that do not pertain to its essence, is not a concept expressing something dead and inactive but on the contrary a concept expressing act, subject, practical intelligence and production, and all these essences were seen to be the same essence.

The fact however that all these things are identical with unlimited being does not of itself remove the antinomy; we still need to show how an ens can produce another ens or entity different from itself. To do this I will begin with the concept of *activity*.

1272. The concept of *activity* differs from the concept of *act*. 'Activity' is the abstract of active, and active is a predicate that supposes a *subject* to which it pertains. But a subject is a first act. *Act* therefore means something logically prior to what is meant by *activity*. Moreover, the abstract of act is actuality, not activity.

Furthermore, the only thing contrary to act is non-act, that is, nothing, just as non-being is the contrary of being. On the other hand, the concept of *activity* shows it to be contrary to *passivity* which also supposes a subject, that is, a first act of which it is predicated.

From this we see that if the essences expressed in the concepts of being, act, subject, complete intelligence and production cannot be applied to God except when considered in their purity and infinity, the essence presented by the concept of *activity* cannot be attributed with the same exactitude to God, because activity essentially contains within itself the limit of being something second, not first. Nevertheless, in common speech 'activity' is also applied to God but not without some impropriety, and I must explain this impropriety.

*Activity* presupposes a subject to which it refers. There are *dialectical subjects* and *real subjects*. The first, supposed by the mind, exist only in the mind, not *in se*. The second are true subjects existing *in se*. By means of this dialectical pretence of subjects, thought attributes *activity* also to a subject that does not exist *in se*. The first, most universal dialectical subject is untermiated being understood as essence. Consequently,

every activity is predicated dialectically of this essence of being. This is the foundation of the *system of dialectical unity* I explained in the previous book.

Because this dialectical subject, that is, essential being, an abstraction from its terms, is most universal, it can be considered as the subject of the infinite activity in God or as the subject of the finite activity in the world.

If it is considered as the subject of finite activity, there is a distinction *in se* between on the one hand unterminated being as a dialectical subject and on the other the activity predicated in it. As we have seen, all finite entia are not being but pure real terms, existing through their union with being: thus they have being as something else, they are not being itself. This distinction *in se* between unterminated being conceived by the mind as subject and the reality constituting the finite real allowed our mind, after observing the distinction, to distinguish between the concepts of act and activity. We found in subsistent finite things an act prior to all their activity and also to their first act that constitutes them as terminated entia.

However we must note that the only positive concepts our mind has are those it extracts from the consideration of finite entia, which alone come within our natural experience. Nor can we use other concepts to reason about things outside our experience, and words are instituted to mean these concepts and not others. Consequently, when our mind wishes to reason about the divine nature, it is forced to apply to it totally inadequate concepts and words, and also some distinctions that are not in the divine nature. Although we can, through a higher reflection, acknowledge the defect in this way of conceiving and speaking, we cannot remedy the defect by substituting something better. Nevertheless our mind avoids error by acknowledging the defect as irremediable.

1273. When we therefore distinguish also in God *initial being* as first act or subject, and attribute to this act an *activity* by which initial being diffuses into and is completed in the three terms, the subjective, the objective and the holy one, we introduce a purely dialectical distinction, which has no truth at all in God. Moreover, the first of these three terms is not *in se* a term, but solely a term in the dialectical way it is conceived: our mind distinguishes it from the *initial being* that we conceive as

developing in it. A higher reflection is necessary therefore to emend this second inaccuracy and acknowledge that because initial being is a pure abstract and hence *in se* not subsistent, the only subject is subsistent being which of itself produces the two personal terms, the objective and the holy one.

When these two inaccuracies in the dialectical way of mental conception have been removed, a third inaccuracy appears: we still attribute the *activity* of producing the two terms to absolute Being as subsistent subject and first act.

But this distinction between the first-act-subject and the producing activity certainly does not exist in reality. All that we can understand as *producing activity* is that which essentially constitutes this *act-subject*, neither more nor less. Consequently, the act-subject cannot be called anything other than being, subject and producing act, a producing act that is always complete *ab aeterno* — we cannot speak of an *activity* of a *subject*, as if the *activity* and the *subject* were two things. Absolute Being therefore, that is, producing act, is simply a subsistent relationship to the Son, a product of absolute Being, that is, generated and proceeded (and hence a subsistent relationship to the Holy Spirit), and as such is called Father. Thus, when we distinguish the *first-act-subject* from the *producing act*, and the producing act is called *activity* of the *subject*, we introduce a dialectical distinction. But the distinction is not truly valid because the Father is *absolute being itself, first act, subject per se essentially producing, or production*, so that all these names do not indicate several things but one entirely simple thing, to which they can all be applied.

However, because this being is, as I said, producing act, infinite intellective act, it must have an object, and the only object it can have is itself. Hence, a duality is revealed deep within being. The intellective act, which some would improperly call *activity*, is therefore also object and, as object, term of itself; it is, in the way I have explained, another person. In this person the same vital act, object most lovable *per se*, continues to produce the second term which is *act-object loved per se*, a third person. The act of essence and production remains one, but the distinction remains as a fact through the subsistent relationships of begetter and begotten and of spirant and spirated, relationships that are found in the one act of the divine essence

and distinguish the persons. Consequently, an essential trinity appears in the one being.

1274. Clearly therefore, the two divine persons, Son and Holy Spirit, must not be conceived as *effects*. The being of effect differs from the being of cause, whereas the three persons have numerically total identical being, and only the mode in which total identical being is, differs: the being is total, identical and first act in subjective, objective and holy mode: 1. the intellective act (not only speculative but absolute, and therefore practical and volitive) is, as *subject* and having the relationship of producing itself as object, the person of the Father: 2. the act, as produced, generated, *object*, is the person of the Son, and 3. as essentially beloved, living object, it is the person of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the act, essence and production (which is one sole thing), all of this, which is the Father, is in the Son, and all this loved by the producing activity which is the Father and in the Son, is in the Holy Spirit. Hence, because the Son and the Holy Spirit cannot be strictly called *effects*, for the same reason the Father cannot strictly be called *cause*, nor the Son relative to the Holy Spirit. The concept of cause contains this property: 'It is something that exists, an abstraction made from its quality of cause, or at least something that can be conceived as a nature, without having to think of its effect'. God however does not exist as an abstraction made from the persons; God, the first person, exists only in his quality of Father, or better, in his relationship of Father; it is impossible to think of the nature of God the Father without thinking (at least implicitly) of his two terms, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The same must be said about the Son, who is in the Father, with regard to the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, who in God, shall we say, is cause of the Son and the Holy Spirit? What shall we call this cause? Is it perhaps the *divine essence*? But the divine essence does not exist separate from the persons; we cannot therefore attribute the predicate 'cause' to it.

Is the Father the cause? But if we say the Father, we have said the Son; we have posited his term, but the Father does not exist prior to and independently of this term. Hence, we lack the subject, whom we could then call cause. So we do not find in God a nature which could be conceived without the two terms and could consequently be called their cause.

This explains why the Latin Fathers wisely substituted a more exact way of speaking for that of the Greek Fathers. The Greeks called the Father *cause* of the Son,<sup>21</sup> but the Latins called him *principle*, not *cause*, which was also more in conformity with the language of the divine Scriptures.

1275. St. Thomas gives the same reason as I for this amendment of theological language, which I took from him. He divides it into two parts and adds the authority of sacred Scripture. I will therefore use his words to confirm all I have said:

The Latins do not say Father, *cause* of the Son or of the Holy Spirit, but only *principle* or *author*. And do so for three reasons:

1. It was not possible to understand the Father as cause of the Son in a formal or material or final way. He is therefore understood only as an *originating cause*, which is an efficient cause. And because this cause is always found to be essentially different from what it causes, and it was necessary to avoid any misunderstanding that the essence of the Son differs from the essence of the Father, the Father was not said to be *cause* of the Son. Our preference therefore is for words that mean *origin* with some consubstantiality, like 'source', 'beginning' and suchlike.

2. In my opinion, *cause* corresponds to *effect*. Hence I do not say that the Father is cause in order to avoid the understanding that the Son has been made. Philosophers call God the first cause, and they understand that all that is *caused* is included in the universality of creatures. Consequently, if we said that the Son had a cause, he could be understood as included in the universality of creatures or of what is caused.

3. The human being cannot speak easily about divine things in a way different from the way sacred Scripture speaks about them. Scripture. Scripture calls the Father *principle* of the Son, as we see in the first chapter of John: 'In the beginning [Italian: *principio*] was the Word'. It never speaks of the Father as cause of the Son, or of the Son as caused.

<sup>21</sup> Athanasius, in Act. *Nicaen. Synod.* — Greg. Nazianzen, *De Theol.* 3; *Orat.* 29 *de dogmat. et constitut. episcop.*, and *Orat.* 3 *quae est prima de Fid.* — John Damascene, *De Fid.*, 1: 8, 9, 11.



St Thomas truly finds 'principle' a most fitting word for the Father. He says:

When speaking about God, nothing is more appropriate than the word *principle* to express anything pertaining to origin. The things in God are incomprehensible and we cannot define them. Hence, when speaking about God we use more appropriately common nouns rather than proper nouns, and the noun supremely proper to him is being: he who is. Just as *cause* is a more common noun than *element*, so *principle* is a more common noun than *cause*. We call a point the principle, not the cause of a line. Hence, most appropriately, we use *principle* when speaking of God.<sup>22</sup>

1276. For the rest, whether the word 'principle' expresses a concept of greater extension than 'cause', or vice versa depends on use. The Greek authors sometimes gave 'cause', αἰτία, αἰτιον, a more extensive meaning than principle ἀρχή, and sometimes the same extension; they teach therefore the same as the Latin Fathers, with a change only in the way they express themselves. If we understand 'cause' as 'all that gives origin', there are causes that are *principles* and causes that are *causes in the strict sense*. If we want to distinguish these two kinds and correctly note their difference, we will have the following definitions: *principle* is the cause that does not have a subject different from it, but in so far as cause is subject. Hence, in this kind of cause two things are not distinguished: the subject-ens and its duality of cause which is added to it. The subject-ens is the cause itself such that the subject-ens is a *subsistent cause*; in other words, to be cause is so essential to it that this fact constitutes it ens. Such is God the Father; he is first person precisely because he is the principle of the Son, who without this principle would not be. The concepts of cause and of person are identified here and admit only a dialectical distinction by a hypothetical abstraction.

*Cause in the strict sense*, that is, distinguished from principle, is that in which we conceive an ens or subject without thinking that the ens or subject originates another entity, and we later attribute to this ens the power or act to originate another entity different from and unnecessary for constituting its concept.

<sup>22</sup> *Opus. contra errores Graecorum*, c. 1.

Cause as *principle* is itself a *subject*; *cause* as non-principle is a *quality* of a subject previously conceived.

'Principle' is also used with other meanings, for example to indicate extremes or limits. Thus, the *point* in which a line ends is called 'principle' because the movement of the point that describes the line in space can be conceived as beginning there. But strictly speaking, what begins is not a cause but the first effort of the effect that comes from existence. It is called principle because our mind attributes some causality to it (cf. *TY* 1: [135]).

1277. Finally, so as not to neglect any of the related concepts, we must recall the concept of *power*, which I defined as 'a cause that remains the subject of its own effect'. This concept lies between the concept of cause in the strict sense and the concept of principle in the strict sense. In common with cause in the strict sense the subject of *power* exists prior to the act with which it produces, but in common with the concept of principle in the strict sense, what power produces is not divided from the producer, which remains its subject. Note: the word 'activity' is appropriate to the subject both as cause in the strict sense and as *power*, but is not appropriate to the principle-subject except in an improper, dialectical way, because neither it nor 'cause' nor 'power' are appropriate to the principle-subject in the strict sense.

## Article 5

Solution to the antinomy presented by the concept of cause

1278. So far we have not solved the antinomy contained in the concept of cause, although we have made some progress towards it. We have looked into the nature of being to see what the structure of being is and whether we could find help in its internal order to solve the antinomy.

We saw in fact that being has a living, not a dead nature and contains essentially an infinite, immutable, subsistent, internal action. We also found that this essential, internal action of absolute being, free of all limit of virtuality, is a productive, intellectual action. It is a productive, intellectual action because

[1277–1278]

intelligence naturally directs itself to go into its object and, if the intelligence is infinite, it must of itself produce the object. Moreover, as we have seen, this amative, living, infinite intelligence is necessarily volitive, such that intellect and will constitute one act, and this act has as it were two levels, one of which has a first term, the other a second term. The nature of any volitive act corresponds to the object that is the first term of the volitive, intellectual act, whereas the *object* of an infinite intelligence is the whole of being. Moreover, the infinite, volitive, intellectual act, which is a first act and subject of itself, is in its own power so that it is more true to say, 'It is, because it wills' than to say, 'It wills, because it is'. In fact, in the ontological order, in the order of ens *in se*, the explanation of the abstract lies in the concrete and not vice versa; also our concept 'being' is more abstract than our concept 'volition'. We must therefore assert that *volition* is the *being* itself that is in God rather than that the *being* is *volition*. If subsistent volition is therefore divine being, we must see how this volition must be conceived so that it is infinite and perfect in every way. The volition can have no other object than itself, which is infinite being, and if it did not will infinite being, it could will nothing else because it would not be. But being cannot not be; it must therefore will itself because to be and to will itself are identical, they constitute only one essence. Hence being wills itself *in se* object, and thus is. In order that Being is, it does not have to will another.

1279. But besides this absolute act of willing, with which Being wills its total self, it can also will being in a finite mode. This can be deduced from the concepts of intelligence and volition. In fact the concept of intelligence is as extensive as the object can be. And the object can be regarded by intelligence both in its totality and as confined within certain limits. Hence, the concept of intelligence contains the possibility of understanding being whether with or without limits — in both modes, being is *per se* the object of intelligence. The same must be said about the concept of volition, which extends to all the possible objects of intelligence. However, to understand and will limited objects is not necessary in order that being is. Consequently, there is a volitive, intellectual act which is not necessary but free, because it does not necessarily form part of the concept of the act by which God is, the act with which he

affirms and wills himself. But this act with which Being affirms and wills itself and thus is, would not be infinite if it did not include the *power* to understand and will being in its finite modes. In the order of concepts therefore, the concept of the intellective and volitive act through which Being understands and wills itself and thus is, *precedes*. This act contains essentially the *power of the act* with which Being understands and wills being with limitations, but does not contain this second act itself, whose concept therefore is *posterior*. The first act, which is being, is necessary because being cannot not be. The second act is free because the limited modes of being are not contained actually but only virtually in total being. But if absolute being cannot contain any virtuality whatsoever, how are these modes contained virtually in being? Virtuality, as I said, arises from the concept of free intelligence. Free intelligence, in addition to the gaze with which it objectivises all being, can limit its object in so far as it is a pure object (objective form) and not a person. Intelligence has therefore both an unlimited, necessary gaze which embraces all being, and a gaze which limits the object and is free. Hence, the limitation does not apply to subsistent being, but is a production of the mind which, as master of its own act, wills, in addition to seeing all being, to see being within the limits which it freely imposes on being. In fact, *limit* is not *being*: limiting the object of intelligence does not indicate a defect or powerlessness but a perfection and power: a person who can do more can do less, but in a person who cannot do more, to do less is defective. However, in a person who can do and does do more, and can at the same time, if he wishes, also do less without ceasing to do more, in such a person there is, as I said, perfection and fullness of power. Hence, both the capacity and the act with which Being fully understands and penetrates itself also contains the capacity to understand, as it wills, being, within limits willed and freely imposed by Being.

1280. But granted that Being freely carries out this act of volitive intelligence with which it limits its own object, the following will be the result:

1. Being, as being, is essentially unlimitable. Hence any limitation it might have annihilates it because it removes its essence. The virtual limitation which being may have is relative to the mind and not in being existing *in se*.

2. The mind, however, can consider separately *initial being* (being as idea) and the *real term* of being. But this separation is still dialectical and purely relative to the mind, because the *real term of being*, as infinite, is itself essentially being.

3. The real term of being considered separately from initial being can be limited by the mind, in which case the real term loses its identity with being, and having lost it, becomes something else, non-being (specific idea, possible finite ens).

4. This very limited, real term is seen by the free divine mind in the infinite term and is simultaneously *willed* by an act of volition which terminates in it. This volitive, intellective act whose object is a *finite real term*, unites this term to initial being. The act, in so far as intellective, can consider the term apart from being, in its possibility of having being (idea), but the volitive act cannot will what is totally non-being. It must therefore will the term to be, and for it to be, must unite it to initial being which makes it exist. Strictly speaking, this is the creative act.

The effect of this act is to give the finite real term its own existence, relative to itself. Although the term is not being to itself but a finite term which does not identify with being, it has and continuously receives from the presence of something else, that is, from being, existence relative to itself.

This subject to which existence refers is non-being. It is therefore a different ens from the ens which is being. Just as the latter exists to itself through the consciousness it has that it is itself being and cannot not be and that therefore it exists absolutely, so the ens which is non-being exists to itself (granted it is endowed with consciousness relative to which other unconscious entia exist) through the consciousness of not being being and hence of not absolutely existing. It is conscious of existing solely relative to the being from which it continuously receives existence, that is, relative to that ens which alone exists *per se*, and exists in virtue of and in the mode of this consciousness.

1281. By means of this theory of Creation, which I have already explained, we can reconcile the antinomy seen in the common concept of cause.

The antinomy is this: ens has the property of oneness. It is therefore a contradiction that it can become two, as seems

necessary if it is to have the quality of cause. However, according to the theory I have explained, ens does not come out from itself, instead it produces another ens. The problem is therefore the following: the name 'ens' is changed because, in my theory, the ens which does not come out from itself is absolute ens — in fact there would be a true contradiction if we claimed that absolute ens produced another absolute ens. But there is no contradiction in thinking on the one hand that because ens is essentially action, this action has a term which in the ens that does the action is absolute (just as the ens is absolute) and is the ens itself, as we shall see, and on the other thinking at the same time that this term can be considered within its limits, within which it is no longer absolute ens. Closed within these limits therefore, it has an existence relative to itself, just as it certainly must have this existence, seeing that it is a term different from being (although contained in being). In fact, anything different from being, which a finite term is, must be something to itself and not nothing, otherwise it would be neither finite nor distinguished from being.

Granted therefore that the intelligence which is essentially being has the virtue to understand and will a finite term (an aptitude proper to intelligence and contained in the concept of intelligence in general), this finiteness makes the term an ens different from infinite ens and, if it is also willed, an ens which has its own existence because enclosed within those confines of which God cannot be the subject. Hence, the act which is enclosed in these confines cannot be the act which has no confines; it is therefore another act, first among the acts which have confines and can originate in it. Consequently, if it is another act and first in its order, it constitutes another subject, and if another subject, another ens.

1281a. Clearly, the teaching I gave earlier about identity and difference has resolved the suggested antinomy. The teaching established that 'whenever the essence of an entity undergoes any change whatsoever, it is no longer the essence of that entity but another essence'. This universal principle, limited to entia, becomes: 'Whenever the essence of an ens undergoes a change, it is no longer that ens but another.' If we now apply this principle to the case in question, we have: 'The essence of God is infinite being. If something finite is given to it, this finite entity,

whatever it is, is another ens and no longer the previous ens. An intelligence however that thinks the infinite, can limit the object of its thought. It does so by viewing the finite object in the infinite by means of limits which the intelligence freely adds and of which the infinite cannot be subject — if the infinite were limited in this way it would cease to be infinite. This finite object can present a subject that has consciousness of itself, but is finite and therefore a finite ens. So far, the operation of the mind has not gone out of itself but has thought the possibility of a finite ens different from itself and from its infinite object which can have a subjective existence. This intelligence, however, is also volitive and operative. It can therefore will and operate this finite ens or subject which it freely contemplates in a finite object that it has delineated in the infinite. If it wills this ens, the ens is, because to will is an act of being. The creating God therefore, who is being, makes a volition which is an act of being and whose term is finite ens. This act of being carried out by God (in which there is essentially volition) is the bond, the communication, the bridge, the hyphen between God creating and the creature. The finite ens, which now is, is in God through the act of being that the divine volition is, both as object of the divine mind and as finite term of the volition which wills this ens in the infinite object where the volition sees it; it is also *in se* within its limitation, and as such has relative existence, which does not make it an infinite ens but another ens. Its existence is not absolute but relative to the confines of its own consciousness or of its own feeling or of the terms of this feeling.

1282. The antinomy of cause therefore, which the Pantheists of every age could not resolve (their systems pertain to the period of *dialectical thought*, not absolute thought) is solved by speaking about the first cause in the following way:

Creating Ens is both one and trine because it is volitive intellective. This Trine-One ens can, through its volitive intellective essence and without going outside itself, think and will both itself and finite entia. Because it thinks and wills these finite entia without going outside itself, they are first of all internal terms of the volitive intellective act, and as internal terms are not distinguished from this act. If this contains no contradiction, there cannot be contradiction in the following necessary

consequence and result of all this: finite ens has that first act which is contained within its limits and is not absolutely first but relative to the limits. This first act is a subject and a finite ens. But because this act, considered *in se*, is not the act of God which is essentially infinite, we have a different ens. The creating cause does not go outside itself when creating, but as a necessary consequence of what this cause can do within itself a relative existence comes forth. This relative existence, as relative, is said to be and truly is essentially different from God, which means the same as outside God.

### Article 6

How the processions of the divine persons are the cause of the creation of finite entia<sup>23</sup>

1283. I have described God as one simple act, which is being without limits. I said that this act is volitive-intellective, as it has two levels or terms. This one act, in reference to its two terms, is called Principle or Father. The first term, in so far as referring to its principle, is called Son, and the second term, in so far as referring to the first two from which it proceeds, is called Holy Spirit.

I said that finite ens is also a term of this volitive-intellective act, which sees finite ens in its first term (which is itself like a perfect object), because the act freely restricts ens seen within certain confines. This object-finite ens, formed in this way, is willed and affirmed by the act. As a result, finite ens is posited in being, in its relative, finite existence.

This description presents the creative act as posterior to and different from the act of procession of the persons. This would make us think that it is another act and therefore that the Creator God had two acts: the first, the procession and constitution of himself as one and trine in his own nature, the second, creation. But this contradicts the perfection of divine nature which requires that in God there is no first and second act but only one entirely simple act, and that if this act were not sufficient for

<sup>23</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I, q. 33, art. 3, ad 1; q. 45, art. 6 and art 7, ad 3.



everything, it would not be sufficient for itself and would therefore not be fully perfect and infinite.

1284. We must remember that there is certainly a *logical* priority in the concept of the act through which God is, and a logical posteriority in the concept of the act through which God creates. This priority and posteriority of the two concepts arise in our mind because it is impossible to think the creative act that God accomplishes without thinking that God is. Hence in the concept of the creative act we must include the concept of existence, which is precisely the concept of the procession of the persons. In the concept of the act through which God is, however, the concept of the creative act is not included, because this act is not necessary for constituting him in his nature. Furthermore, if the eternal Mind sees finite being in its object-self, this object, which as person is the Word, must be conceived prior to the gaze with which the eternal Mind sees the finite. And the finite, unable to be perfect in its nature without having an act of love, presupposes that the divine object, personally Word, is infinitely loved by the infinite Mind in order that the divine Mind can love the finite it designs in this object.

But logical priority is simply an order present in the objects of the mind, in so far as they are contained in the mind in such a way that one is included in the other. What is included and contained is said to be posterior to what includes and contains — content cannot be thought without a container, but a container can be thought without content. This explains why the divine Word as object of the mind has a logical priority to the world which is contained in the Word in the way I have described. Nevertheless, the mind can, with a single act, think many objects which have this logical priority; it can think both the container and the content with the same act. Hence the logical priority and posteriority of objects that are thought, which posits an order among the objects, does not necessarily imply a multiplicity of acts of the mind or a priority and posteriority of these acts. Consequently, the act with which the eternal, volitive Mind pronounces itself and generates the Word, is the same identical act with which it pronounces the world in its Word and with which it creates the world. And just as with this identical act in so far as essentially effective it loves itself in its Word with which it spirates eternal, infinite Love, so with the same act

it loves and wills the world, ordering it towards love and beatitude.

1284a. The act therefore that terminates in the Word and in the Holy Spirit and in the world is one single act. But because the first two terms are infinite and are the same act and subject in another mode, they are God and divine persons, whereas the world, as finite, cannot be God or a divine person. Hence, the divine act, considered as producing the world, cannot have the concept of personal procession. If we now consider that the divine act is identical in all three persons, who are distinguished only through the different mode in which the act is, in other words, through the relationships of origin, we can conclude that the divine act whose term is the world is an act common to all three persons and to the one essence equal and identical in them. This follows from what I have said: in this act there are no processions or relationships resulting from processions, which persist in God and constitute the persons.

We see from all this how the divine essence, without losing the unicity of the act which it is, can be called 'cause' in relationship with the world which it creates. I have defined cause in the strict sense as 'an entity that produces another entity different from itself and can be conceived as a subject without the need, in the concept, for a productive act or a produced entity.' Thus, the subject is conceived first and the quality of producer afterwards.

1285. We have seen that both the creative act and what is created do not necessarily enter into the concept of God. On the other hand, the begetting act and the Son, that is, the Begotten, enter necessarily into the concept of God the Father, who is constituted by the begetting act. For this reason, God the Father is called Principle, not cause (in the strict sense), of the Son. However, God, one and trine, is called cause, truly and in the strict sense, of the world. This shows the error of Gioberti's formula, 'Ens creates existences,' as I have already noted, which simply means we cannot have the concept of Ens, that is, of God without the concept of Creator. On the contrary, the truth is that the concept of creator is posterior to that of God and, in the order of human concepts, the concept of God is posterior to that of undetermined being, because through the latter we know absolute Being, but not vice versa. That the concept of the

world is posterior to the Word is not only relative to our mind, but it follows this order in divine intelligence, although the act of this intelligence is one and totally simple and eternal, with the Word as its Object and, in the Word, the world.

It may be asked whether the concept of activity can be applied to God as Cause of the world so that the creator can be called *active*. This can be done by an abstraction. If we first conceive the subject of God and attribute to it the act of creation, although this act is the same as the act that constitutes the divine nature, we can through abstraction divide them by saying that 'God is active relative to the world he creates', and give him the activity as an addition to the act that constitutes him. But this way of conceiving is only relative to us, precisely because it depends on a mere abstraction that divides the divine act into two concepts, establishing a priority and a posteriority between them. However, strictly and truly speaking, the act in itself is only one and totally simple, even though it is considered in two respects by the mind. A difference therefore exists between what is said about the divine intellective act and about the objects of this act. The two objects are organated with each other, that is, one is contained in the other. Hence they have a priority and posteriority also in the divine mind. The act that terminates in these two objects is purely one; only our mind divides it into two through abstraction in accordance with the relationship the act has with both objects. Hence, the priority and posteriority are relative to the same act, not to different acts. Thus, when instead of conceiving God as a pure act, we conceive him as a subject-act to which we attribute the *activity* which creates the world, we speak inappropriately but nevertheless adapted to our way of conceiving through abstraction.

We have found therefore that there is a first ens in which *being* and *doing* are one and the same, and God is these. If *being* and *doing* therefore constitute two different act this real division appears only in finite entia, and does so because the two concepts of *being* and *doing* undergo limitations and are not preserved in their first purity — limitation is the general principle underlying every *division* of those essences that *per se* are one only essence.

## CHAPTER 2

### The principle by which we judge what the first cause confers upon second causes

#### Article 1

Summary and confirmation that many terms, one of which is the world different from God, can correspond without contradiction to the oneness of the act of divine essence

1286. So far I have spoken about the real multiplicity found in absolute Being, which is the trinity of divine persons. I have also shown that the world proceeds from God as from its cause. We have seen how the act of this cause, that is, the act of Creation, is performed by God without resulting in two acts: the act through which God is and the act through which he creates the world are certainly distinguished in concept, but not in the act, as it is *in se*, in its own subsistence. This distinction in concept is not one of those distinctions we find when we consider one and the same essence with two external relationships, but a distinction arising from two essences contained in two different concepts, although in God these essences unify and are only one. I distinguished between the *concept of absolute being* and the *concept of creating absolute being*. These concepts offer the mind two acts that have a different essence and are to some degree independent of each other. The first concept, which presents the fully constituted, divine nature, can be thought without our thinking the second presented by this nature as creating. Consequently, as I said, the act of creation plays no role in the constitution of the divine nature finalised *in se*, although the creative act can result from this nature fully constituted *in se*. Hence, I called the creative act *free* because it is not necessary to the constitution of the divine nature, but I called the act of this constitution (the act is the procession of the Son and Holy Spirit) necessary because it constitutes God who, as being, is a necessary ens. This double essence of act, however, presented to our mind in two distinct concepts, does not in any

way require the act to be double in its subsistence. It is not contradictory that the two acts, conceived as distinct, exist as one act that in itself realises both essences. Indeed, because God is intellectual act, it is not at all contradictory, as we saw, that this act has understood itself *ab aeterno*, and in itself the world, and because God is also volitive act, that the act has affirmed and willed itself, and in itself the world — the nature of the intellectual volitive act is the ability to understand and will many objects, one within the other, without its becoming two acts but remaining one act. The fact that this act, relative to itself, is a *necessary volition* and, relative to the world, is a *free volition*, does not multiply the act; only the concept is multiplied, because the difference in God between the necessary nature and the free nature arises from the act's relationship with the two objects joined into one: one of these objects has the property of constituting God (the property of being God) and is therefore called necessary, the other has the property of not constituting God as necessary being, and is therefore called contingent. Hence, the divine act is called *necessary* and *free* in keeping with its objects: in reference to the first object the mind sees the act as principle, and in reference to the second as cause. Nevertheless, because the act of God is eternal and immutable not only as Word and Holy Spirit and Principle of the Word but also as cause of the world, it is called a *free* but not contingent cause, as Aquinas acutely observes.<sup>24</sup> In fact the world and worldly causes, even after their creation, change, but the creative act which embraces the world with all its changes, when once made *ab aeterno*, undergoes no changes. However, because the creative act is not conceived as necessary for constituting the divine nature *in se*, there can be no logical

<sup>24</sup> 'The divine will has freedom, and therefore it is fitting that it can decide as it pleases. But it also has immutability, so that it may unmovably adhere to what it wishes. For this reason, we cannot say that it is a contingent cause because contingent things imply mutability'\* (*In I. Sent.*, d. 45, art. 3, ad 3). St. Thomas then makes divine freedom consist in having its act *in its power*, not in the act's mutability: 'The will of God can decide as it pleases, not by mutability so that it could first wish something and afterwards not wish it, but rather by freedom, because the act of his will is always in his power'\* (*ibid.*, d. 47, art. 1, ad 1). But the fact that the act with which God creates the world is always in the power of God depends on the

contradiction in our thinking the existence of the divine nature without this act. This explains the *logical possibility* that it is not done *ab aeterno*. Whether the creative act, which is not necessary for constituting the divine nature existing in three persons, is a result of this constituted nature is a question I will deal with elsewhere.

Furthermore, there is no contradiction in thinking that the concept of the creative act, although it has a logical posteriority to the concept of the divine nature, is nevertheless co-eternal with this nature. This is clear if we consider that the divine nature is a pure intellective and volitive act, which properly has many objects joined in one (here the container-object is one only, the Word). This absence of contradiction was acknowledged by the most astute minds.<sup>25</sup>

## Article 2

In the world there are principles and causes called second,  
relative to the first cause

1287. I have found two real multiplicities: the trinity of the divine persons in God, and the duality of the absolute ens and the relative ens. The absolute ens is God, the relative ens the world. I reconciled this real multiplicity with the unity of Being by demonstrating that Being, by its very essence, is action, both intellective and volitive action, which can have different objects without ceasing to be one. I also demonstrated that the world in its finite existence is a result of the essence of being. The world's

<sup>25</sup> St. Thomas distinguishes between instantaneous and successive changes. He acknowledges that in entia which act without succession of time many changes can take place at the same moment. Hence he thinks that the good angels had merited in the first instant of their creation: 'It is not at all contradictory that a term of creation and a term of free will exist at one and the same time.'\* He also notes that the *operation* and *existence of a thing* can be simultaneous when both come from the same beginning: 'The operation which begins simultaneously with the existence of a thing is bestowed on it by the agent from which it has existence'\* (S.T., I, q. 63, art 5). Hence, *Being* which is of itself and has the Beginning in it, can freely create the World with the act with which it is.

cause and reason is therefore in this essence, in such a way that what is essential for absolute Being is not to create the world but to be able to create it, in the way it has created it.

I must now explain the remaining real multiplicity we encounter. This multiplicity in the world results partly from the Creator who has formed the world out of many entia and conserves them, and partly from the world that contains a chain of causes and effects. We must therefore attentively examine the World which has been produced and, considering this effect, see on the one hand what it receives from the first cause and on the other what it itself does as container of causes, causes which relative to the first cause are called second causes. In short, we must explain the concatenation or continuity of second causes with the first.

To do this we must first distinguish in the world between *causes* in the strict sense and causes that are *principles*. To avoid ambiguities let us look at the use, or rather the uses, of these two words.

I said that 'cause' and 'principle' were sometimes used in an equally universal sense to mean 'what gives origin'. In this sense they were used interchangeably as synonyms. The Scholastics, using the same language as Aristotle, ranked *matter* and *form* among causes. But in a strict sense these are *principles*, as Aristotle himself sometimes calls them. Speaking more strictly they are *elementary principles* or *elements*, that is, 'natures which compose an ens'. They are not therefore causes in the strict sense. As I have said, a nature cannot be called cause in the strict sense if it does not first exist as an ens or subject, in which case causative potency or causal act can afterwards be predicated of it. On the other hand, when all causes in the strict sense are given the name 'principle', this word is taken as the genus, and cause as the species. While I do not totally repudiate the wider meaning of these words, I will keep to their more limited meanings whenever I speak about causes as opposed to principles, or of principles as opposed to causes. According to these more limited meanings, 'a principle is the first act of an ens or entity from which everything in the ens or entity proceeds'; cause is 'an ens or entity from which another ens or entity proceeds which does not form part of the ens or entity from which it proceeds'.

In the wider sense of the words, they can be equally called two species of causes or two species of principles.

It is clear that in the world there are *principles* and *causes*. I have shown that there are principles by my analysis in *Psychology* (PSY, 2: 835–839, 842–846). That there are causes is proved by the mutual actions which entia of the world exercise upon each other, mutually modifying one other. I class both under the generic name of *second causes*.

### Article 3

The principle according to which we can define what the first cause confers on the world, and the actions carried out by the second causes.

1288. We cannot know causes and their concurrence in producing an effect without exploring and analysing what an effect itself is. By examining the intimate constitution of finite ens I found that effect is formed from two elements of different natures: 1. being (initial and objective), and 2. the finite real, the non-proper term of initial being.

These two elements differ greatly in that *being* is antecedent in concept to the finite real, and does not constitute the *subject* that is finite ens. The finite ens-subject is simply the finite real.

But the union of the two elements is so intimate that the *finite real* continuously has existence from its union with the other element, *being*, which is not it, so that through a synthesisism it is nothing without being. On the other hand, united with being, it is something different from being, and the difference is between absoluteness and relativity.

Being is always in an absolute *mode*, although it does not show itself as absolute and complete, but as undetermined, common, virtual; the finite real is in a relative mode.

*Being* (the absolute element in finite ens) can come only from the first cause, from God. And because finite ens has existence continuously from *being*, it is totally an effect of the first cause, God. But granted that the *finite real* exists relatively, it has through this existence a first act, and in this first act it has the quality of *cause*. These are the *second causes*.



The first cause therefore gives being and together with being existence to the relative real. Then, in the order of relative existence, the existent real produces some effects, relative to which it is *second cause* (principle, potency, cause). The action of the first cause is therefore always by way of creation; the rest is done by second causes in the order of relative existence. This is what St. Thomas meant when he says: 'God gives being, but other causes determine it'<sup>26</sup> (*TCY*, [546, 549–552, 562–567, 570–573]).

The application of this principle requires a rather long explanation, which I will attempt by taking up the argument from the beginning.

<sup>26</sup> St. Thomas in 2 *Dist.*, I, q. 1, 4.

## CHAPTER 3

### An explanation of eternal typification prepares the way for applying the principle

#### Article 1

The starting point must be the first cause considered as the cause that creates the person-principles present in the world

1289. We must first note that everything we think in the world is like chains whose links are always joined to a first link which is the person (*AMS*, 906; *Ontolog.*). Persons in the world constitute the end of all other non-person things, which are attached so closely to persons by physical, dynamic, intellective and moral ties that we can rightly say that in every sense they are through persons. Consequently, because they exist with an existence relative to the person, we must begin by considering the creative act of the first Cause relative to the person. Once we have explained the existence of finite persons, we will have the explanation for the existence of the other non-person things that refer to persons.

But creation implies two things: eternal, ideal types and real existences. I must therefore first explain the origin of the ideal types of things. I call this origin ‘typification’, and it has been in the divine mind *ab aeterno*.

I will start therefore by explaining how the first Cause, without losing its unity and, as being, without losing the unity of being, can produce and have in itself *ab aeterno* the types of things.

#### Article 2

The nature of being implies a trinity of persons because it is the nature of an infinite, intellective acts

1290. I said that absolute being, one and most simple, is act,

[1289–1290]

and this essential act is intellective and volitive. Prior to this being there is in fact nothing, there can be nothing; it is absolutely first.

This intellective volitive act which being is, is an act that understands, affirms and wills itself. Because the nature of this being-act is such that it understands and affirms itself, two forms must appear in it: it totally understands and simultaneously is totally understood. Although the act itself is one and the same, its nature is necessarily to understand totally and be totally understood. Moreover, one of these two forms clearly cannot exist without the other: that which actually understands cannot be conceived without that which is actually understood, nor can the actually understood be conceived without that which actually understands. As first act, there is nothing present to it, nothing for it to understand except itself. As infinite act, all of it must understand and all of it be understood. If only a part had understanding and not the rest, or if only a part were understood and not the rest, the intellective act would clearly not be infinite; it would have a limit beyond which thought could pass and conceive a greater intelligence.

But if the intellective act must be truly infinite, it must think understood being in such a way that it also is infinite and most real. And because the intellective act understands itself as person, the understood must also be person. This excess of intellective power is called 'generation', which explains the Word, a second person in the same act, and term of the same act.

This act is an act of life, will and love. Hence, after understanding itself so abundantly, it totally loves its total understood self in the same abundant way. In other words, the lover posits his total self in what is loved (otherwise the act would not be infinite), and through this abundance what is loved itself as such also becomes most real and existent *per se* as person. But because this object of love is the same infinite being, an infinitely understood lover, this third person does not exit from the act, which is an identical act in three persons, God one and trine, blessed forever.

## Article 3

The nature of being, because it is the nature of an infinite, intellectual act, implies that it can have finite objects

1291. I will continue to consider what is contained in the concept of unique being, granted that it has the nature of an infinite, volitive, intellectual act.

All being understands; all being is understood. Being which understands is a person; being understood in the abundant way mentioned above is a person.

To be *person* means to have an action, an energy proper to person, to be principle of the continuous, eternal act. Hence, intellection must not only know itself (absolute being-object) in its infinity but also partially, within the limits it cares to establish, which are only virtually in intelligible, absolute being.

This results from the concept of intelligence and of the intelligible, a concept which we ourselves can have because we are intelligence and have an intelligible element. We see, however, that our intelligence that has a given intelligible element can think this intelligible element in its totality and in its parts, that is, within the limits it is virtually capable of; we can freely assign these limits to it by analysis and abstraction, and thus limit the object of our thought to the sphere we determine. If we can do this, how much more must infinite intelligence be able to do it! The perfection of intelligence requires it to be capable of knowing an intelligible thing in its totality and also in its parts predefined in the thing by the intelligence. Without this, either the intelligible would not be intelligible in every way and therefore not totally and fully intelligible, or the intelligence would not understand all the intelligible nor understand it in every way it can be understood. But, as I said, absolute being must be fully and in every way intelligible if the intelligence that has it as object is to be infinite. Divine intelligence therefore must understand itself (absolute being) not only in its own totality, but bound by the confines it places on absolute being as its object.

Therefore, if we grant that absolute being is infinite intelligence and fully understands itself, we must also grant that it understands both unlimited being and being that is bound by

certain limits. The same must also be said about loving it and willing it. All this is part of the concept of being-as-one, whose essence is an infinite, volitive intelligence. We must either deny this or grant that with one sole act such an intellection embraces both the unlimited and the limited.

#### Article 4

It is proper to intelligence to multiply its objects  
without multiplying itself

1292. Here I must answer the following objection that naturally presents itself:

‘If the mind limits its total object, either the limits are of the object, in which case the total object no longer is, because it becomes a partial object, or they are not limits of the total object, in which case the mind does not limit the object. The mind’s object will therefore be either unlimited or limited, which means there will not be two objects because it is a contradiction that the same identical object can simultaneously be limited and unlimited.’

I reply that the object can be multiplied by the mind, and I will explain how and why.

The object has an essential relationship with the mind such that the object is simply a term of intellection; it exists therefore through and present to the mind. The one infinite object also has an existence *in se* and as a person. The object of the divine mind must therefore be considered under two different relationships: either 1. as it is *in se* as a person, and this existence *in se* cannot be modified, limited or multiplied; or 2. purely as the object of the mind, pertaining to the mind itself, existing in the mind but not *in se*. The object, considered in this way, is the object in so far as known, in so far as it constitutes the actual knowledge of the mind. The known thing, understood as something separate, is an element essential to the intellective act; without it the intellective act would not in itself be complete and hence could not constitute a subject and a complete person. In God, the *known element* acquires a subsistence as person and proper to it. In the divine intellective act this acquisition is

called 'generation' and results from the infinite energy and plenitude with which infinite being is intellection. Through this energy and plenitude infinite being gives and posits itself in the *known element*. However, this does not prevent the known element, as purely known, from remaining in the mind as something pertaining to its personhood, seeing that intelligible being pertains to the same nature or divine essence common to all three divine persons, and that the act of the divine mind terminates in this intelligible nature together with everything to which it extends. Thus, if we limit our consideration to the object as term of the mind and in the mind, and not as subsisting *in se* as a person, it can be limited and multiplied without being destroyed, as I have said.

This object is through the act of the mind; its existence is relative to the mind's act to which it pertains as its completion. This act alone makes it actually object, because the mind with its act makes understood to itself what was previously (logically) only able to be understood. Whether the object is one or more will depend on the act of the personal mind from which the object issues and on which it depends. If the mind with its act places no limit on the object and abstains from analysis, then it makes no abstraction from it; the object will always remain one and identical before the mind. But if the mind is given the faculty to break it up, to divide it as it wishes, in a word, to introduce limits (it is fitting that a personal mind, especially an infinite mind, be given this faculty), it will become many. Does the imposition of limits destroy the unlimited element? To answer this question we must again turn to and attentively consider the nature of the mind's act, which will reveal the following. When the mind, with an object present to it, wishes to consider parts of the object, it never ceases to have before it as a kind of substrate of its operation the totality of the object whose parts it is considering; otherwise it could not discern the parts. The mind cannot consider the object that it itself has limited and circumscribed unless it has before itself the unlimited object in which it thinks the limited. The object is not given as already limited by some other agent — this is impossible in the first and infinite mind — but the mind has it of itself. The mind therefore can of itself consider the limited within the unlimited; it can place limits on it and at the same time keep the object

present in its unlimitedness. In this way the power of the mind multiplies its own objects, and from one produces many.

1293. But are limits in fact imposed on the unlimited object? Would this not be a contradiction?

It would certainly be a contradiction to say that the unlimited was the subject of limits. All this proves is that the statement, 'The mind limits the unlimited' is inaccurate, as we have seen elsewhere. To understand the limiting operation of the mind properly, and to remove completely the proposed difficulty, we must describe it differently.

The object, as pure object, is in the mind, through the mind and present to the mind; it is not *in se*, with a subjective existence different from that of the mind. Because not *in se*, it cannot subjectively receive any modification. It therefore admits no variations in its actuality but is or is not, depending on whether it is or is not the act of the mind to which it refers and in which alone it is. This is the origin of the simplicity and invariability of ideas, so that whatever diversity is seen in two ideas, they are two ideas and not the same identical idea modified; only the essence contained in an idea is taken as subject of another essence or of accidental varieties. Hence, if the act of the mind, that is thought, considers or places in an object something new that the mind did not previously consider, the object is immediately another object, because the act of the mind from which the object receives existence is different. Consequently, we cannot speak with total accuracy of an idea or object, as pure object, of the mind being modified, changed, limited. All we can say is that the mind has multiplied its objects. However, because this multiplication arises from created limits imposed by the mind, we need to explain on what subject the mind imposes these limits, seeing that there is only the unlimited object and nothing else that the mind can take as subject of the limits. This is the remaining difficulty.

To solve it, we must suppose that the mind that has the unlimited object present to it, performs two different acts on it and that these acts remain in the mind. With one of them it views the whole unlimited object; with the other it views something within the object, leaving the rest aside. Because these two objects remain in the mind, it has present to it, through them, two objects: the unlimited object, term of the

first act, and the limited object, the thing seen in the first object. The subject of these limits is the limited object, not the unlimited object. And because the acts of the mind are the principle of such objects, the object will become two or more in accord with the acts of the mind. We cannot say that the limited object is the unlimited thing on which the limits have been imposed. All we can say is that the mind has used the unlimited object-container to form the limited object contained in it. If, however, we suppose that the mind, instead of doing all this with two acts, does it with one act only, we will see how the infinite, intellectual act can, without absurdity, have as its object the infinite, and within this the finite. We will also see how there can be two objects, while the infinite, intellectual act producing them remains one.

#### Article 5

The fact that the mind multiplies its own objects by means of limitations presupposes 1. the concept of matter in its widest sense, 2. the concept of limits and 3. a concept which serves as a rule. Moreover, multiplication presupposes a virtuality in the infinite essence, seen in the concept.

1294. The mind therefore has naturally the power to multiply its own objects by means of limits.

But the logical process of this operation requires the mind to pass from the unlimited object to the concept and thought of limited objects, and, before arriving at these, to have conceived and thought their elementary concepts, that is, *matter* in its universal sense, and *limits*. The Pythagoreans saw this, at least in a confused way, when they imposed what is limitless, τὸ ἀπειρον, and what is limited, τὸ περας, on the elements of all things. It was an enlightened thought, subsequently taken up by all the philosophies of Greece. However they did not see that a limit cannot be united purely at random to matter; a *rule* had to be supposed for determining the union. Plato made progress and knew that [in addition to] the two Pythagorean elements a third concept, a *rule*, had to be admitted. He saw this because he knew that an eternal mind was the cause of finite entia. I will



speak about this *rule* later, but first I will discuss the two elements.

The operations that the mind must perform in order to extract finite objects from an infinite object are the following. The infinite object contains an infinite ens, and of itself makes this ens known to the mind. The infinite ens is necessarily a person, or rather, as we saw, it must be made up of three persons. Person is a subject and a supreme principle (cf. *AMS* [769, 832–837]), and most simple, as is required by the nature of every principle. Person is therefore fully determined and, because as such it cannot receive other determinations, it cannot receive limits, which are a class of determinations. Here I mean ‘person’ not only *in se* but person as pure object of the mind, as purely known. The first thing therefore that the mind must do, by abstraction, is remove from its object the unifying, determining, person principle. When this determining person principle is removed, all that is left of the infinite object still present to the mind is an *undetermined* something, and this undetermined element is precisely what was called *matter* in its widest sense.

This concept of matter, a concept that presents an undetermined essence to thought, give us something that can be determined, a determinable element. And because certain *limits* have the nature of determinations, we have in our mind that which can receive limits, limits of various kinds, indeed every possible limit.

The mind therefore, when passing from an infinite object to thinking finite objects, must first of all accept as mediators the concepts of determinable *matter* and determining *limits*, and with these two concepts as the elements of a union, form the concepts of finite objects. Hence, these objects are composed of two primal elements: limitable matter and limit. But because this composition of limits and matter is not made at random by the mind, the mind must be guided in its operation by a *rule* that is *certain*. I will shortly show what this rule is and how we find it, but before doing so I must first analyse the concept of matter that the mind uses to form the concepts of finite entia.

## Article 6

The four primal genera of matter given by theosophical abstraction

1295. Bearing in mind the definition I have given of matter in its widest sense, 'the determinable undetermined', we see that every idea and, above all, every abstract, is *matter*, understood in this sense.

Therefore the five primal abstracts: subject, act, terminative essence, common ens and vague individual, are also supreme genera of matter.

The subject however is determined by the terminative essence, that is, if the terminative essence is already determined, the subject is also determined; the *act* is determined by the subject and the terminative essence. Thus, the determination of the terminative essence ultimately determines both the subject and the act. The *vague individual* is a determined thing, except that the mind abstracts from the manner of determination. But when the terminative essence is determined, the manner of its determination is also, by that very fact, determined. As a result of all this, the mind will acquire the concept of finite entia if it finds the limits determining the terminative essence, because only these limits determine and constitute the finite ens. As regards *common ens*, we will see later what use the mind makes of it.

The mind finds the terminative essence, which is the determinable element, by abstraction. But abstraction exercised on the absolute infinite object has two levels: we can abstract either from the three *divine persons* alone or also from the *forms of being*.

If we suppose that the divine mind, or even the human mind (by theosophical abstraction) abstracts only from the personhood which is in being, the three forms of being remain, but these are not persons, and precisely for this reason they remain undetermined as terminative essences. Consequently there are three primal, undetermined entities or matters: 1. reality, or *real matter*; 2. *ideal matter*, 3. *moral matter*.

Clearly, *reality* is conceived as an undetermined essence determinable in various ways. Similarly *ideality* or objectivity is

conceived as another undetermined essence capable of receiving different determinations. And the same must be said of *morality*.

These three essences therefore considered in this way (after an abstraction from the subject or person) take on the condition of determinable undetermined entities, and are the three primal matters, the three forms of being considered abstractly from their subject.

1295a. But if in addition we also abstract from the forms of being, all that remains before the mind is undetermined being. Strictly speaking, this being is an abstract *act* which, as I said, is determined through the determination of the subject, which in turn is determined through the determination of the terminative essence. Because *act* admits every subject and every terminative essence, it acquires the condition of first matter of all, as I said in the previous book, but purely dialectical matter. Therefore, it is also the principle and the foundation of the system of unity and of dialectical identity.

If we now consider what the mind has done in this operation, we see it has applied a first limitation by means of an abstractive *subtraction*. It has, as it were, decapitated being by removing from it every personal and subjective principle. This *limitation* consists in removing from it its infinite determination. That which remains therefore (the undetermined, the matter) is the first limited concept. Moreover, because being, with this limitation, cannot be *in se*, and is therefore only in the mind, the mind, aware of this, sees the aptitude which the matter has to be determined again by the mind, and calls this aptitude *virtuality*.

This virtuality of these primal matters extends to the ability not only to recover the *infinite determination* that the mind had removed but also to receive *finite determinations*. These finite determinations are a second genus of limits that are imposed on matter.

The supreme genera therefore of the *limitations* made by the mind are two: 1. *limitation through subtraction* and abstraction, which leaves *indetermination* and *virtuality* in the remaining concept; and 2. *limitation through addition and imposition*, which *determines* what the first genus of limitation had made undetermined, and reduces the virtuality.

## Article 7

## The matter of the World

1296. The four genera of matter described above can be called *divine matter*.

However, they are not all determinable in the same way. If the mind determines them not by limiting them but by adding the determination that they had and that was removed by theosophical abstraction, the mind returns to the sole concept of God.

But if it determines them by *limits* and not by adding the subject and personhood removed from them, then each matter is clearly susceptible of diverse limits.

The universal and first matter of all, that is, *undetermined being* or *abstract act*, receives limits only after the first level of determination has been returned to it, that is, the forms taken from it. The three forms are imperfect determinations but instead of being limitative they are augmentative, although they remain undetermined and determinable. The determining limits therefore are not imposed directly on *being*, that is, on act but, as I said, on being as it is in the three forms or terminative essences. Consequently, the three forms and not being itself are the proximate matter which is determined by limits; being is called determinable solely in so far as considered in one or other of its three forms.

1297. We must therefore investigate the diverse nature of the limits which the three forms can receive when considered as matter, that is, as determinables.

*Ideal matter* (an idea) is not *in se* limitable, as if it were *in se* the subject of limits; it is limitable only through its limited content. This limited content of an idea is the real. Granted therefore a limited real, the idea containing it appears limited through its relationship of container with the limited content. Because the term of this relationship is limited, the container is also limited in so far as the mind considers it purely as container of the limited real and nothing else. The container is therefore limited through a gaze of the mind that considers it exclusively as containing the limit. Thus, the container becomes a generic idea, a specific idea, etc.

What are the limits that moral matter can receive?

The nature of moral essence lies 'in an act of the real, the volitive act of the real subject. Through this act the real, by willing and loving, adheres to the real in all its totality and as known in the idea'. The object cannot be moral unless it contains within itself the *totality* of the real. Consequently, we see that the act relative to the object in which it must terminate cannot be moral unless it is always unlimited. It can however be unlimited in the way that *matter* is unlimited, either in the way that matter determined by the mind with the form of infinity, that is, God, is unlimited, or in the way that God, as perceived, is unlimited. The unlimitedness of matter is a virtual unlimitedness, and *virtuality* is itself a mode of limitation. Moreover, the concept of God, as man can naturally have it by means of logical determinations, retains virtuality.

The first limitation therefore that moral essence can receive is *the virtuality* of the *totality* of the object. This virtuality can vary in degree and form. Hence, the diverse forms of virtue that constitute equivalent moral characteristics in different moral persons.

1297a. Furthermore, the act of adherence that the real subject has to the real totality known in the object can vary in intensity and in degree of fullness; it is fullest only when all the reality infuses the object with love, so to speak. The limitation of this act, therefore, is the second limit that moral matter can receive.

Hence, the limits of this moral matter are the two it receives from the real subject and from ideal matter. Just as it (the moral matter) consists in a relationship arising from its two extremes, so its limits are the limits of these extremes: they are *virtuality*, which is the limit proper to matter, and the *quantity of the subjective act*, which is one of the limits of *real essence*.

Only *real essence* therefore has its own limits in such a way that it constitutes their subject. This explains why the world consists of *real matter*, as I have said, and why the real form of being, but not being, constitutes, as first element, all finite subjects.

Can we say that this *real matter* we have found by a theological abstraction and called divine is indeed the matter that composes the world?

When we ask, '*What kind* of matter composes a finite ens?',

‘what kind’ has many meanings: the kind can be either specific or generic or categorical. The concept of *reality* found by theosophical abstraction is the concept of a *categorical reality*, not of a *generic* or *specific reality*. We can say therefore that the matter or reality composing the world reduces to the ultimate and most universal class of realities, to *categorical, real matter*, which is divine matter. But because the category, that is, the categorical essence, as well as the genus or generic essence and the abstract species or specific essence, are pure antecedents to the real, finite subject, we cannot say that, strictly speaking, this subject is composed of those antecedent matters. Rather, it is composed of a matter which, like determining *species*, reduces to certain genera, and all these as determinants reduce to categorical matter, which is first matter, absolutely undetermined. *World matter* therefore is not the *divine real matter* I have spoken about but is constituted world matter by divine real matter. The creating mind restricts this matter within certain limits that begin to determine it into genera and species.

1298. Hence, the matter *proper* to the world is found by ordinary abstraction. The world is composed of a great number of entia, among which even sensitive entia and bodies are dialectically considered as subjects, although only *persons* are true, complete subjects. We have seen how the mind, abstracting from the subjective principle, draws from determined ens the concept of the matter that I have called terminative essence. Once this abstraction has been carried out, the only thing remaining before the mind is *matter*. Clearly therefore, the *matter of the world* is not solely of one kind but divided into many kinds.

World entia are composed of principle and term in addition to act. If we mentally remove the principle, the *term* remains as a material, undetermined concept. However, the word ‘term’ includes more than the term of world entia, because the term found in world entia does not include every possible term. ‘Term’ therefore does not, solely by itself, express precisely this world matter but has to be restricted by some difference. Hence, when we want to add to the concept of *term* the difference which determines the world term, but do not want to take this difference from a negative or relative or abstract concept (which the adjective ‘world’ would precisely be), we see that the material term of the world cannot be reduced to one but is many.

However, because a *principle* receives its determination from its term, the *principle* of finite entia, divided from its term, is an undetermined concept, the abstract *subject*, and constitutes another genus of world matter. Consequently, although the *principle* constitutes the subject of finite entia, the undetermined subject or principle as conceived in the idea is something quite different from the subsistent subject. The undetermined principle and subject, thought in the idea, has been deprived by abstraction of the real subject that alone is determined. The principle and subject therefore is matter, that is, 'a determinable undetermined'.

The two supreme genera of undetermined entities in the world are *principle* and *term*, separated by analysis. Their specification is such that they can apply only to the finite entia that make up the world, and we must always bear in mind that the principle is determined by the determination of the term and that finite entia must also have an act, that is, being.

1298a. If we want to know this specification, several species of the two genera immediately present themselves, species which cannot be reduced to a smaller number. In fact, because we must proceed by exercising ordinary abstraction on world entia, we conceive some of them as bodies, others as feeling entia, others as intellective entia, and we note that none of these three genera can be reduced to one of the others. Hence, analysis gives us 1. a (dialectical) subject or corporeal first act, and 2. the extended term of this first act; 3. a feeling subject and 4. the feeling term; 5. an intellective, personal subject and 6. the objective term.

We have therefore six species of undetermined elements, that is, of matters: three undetermined principles and three undetermined terms, in addition to the act.

But if we consider the sixth of these species of matter, the *objective term*, we find it to be the same as the fourth genus of *divine matter*, which is dialectical and totally first matter, that is, totally undetermined being, seen however in the ideal form, which is the third genus of matter or of terminative essence. This identity between world matter and divine matter is therefore the connection between the world and the supraworld essence. Consequently, one of the elements composing the world is divine, although it is not God, as I have already shown.

This means that the supreme real genera of purely world

matter are five. But the first, the principle or subject of the body-ens, is real dialectically considered, but not real *in se*, because in a pure body a true unity and a true principle are not seen as possible, unless the principle is a feeling principle.

Because the determinations of principles are exactly those of the terms, that is, the principles are determined when the terms are determined, the eternal mind had simply to determine the terms in order that the concepts of world entia be composed. These terms are two: 1. the corporeal feelable (that is, space and body), and 2. undetermined being in the idea. However, regarding man, the second term receives no other determination in the constitution of man.

### Article 8

A digression concerning a question raised by Aristotle against the Platonists concerning the nature of universals

1299. Aristotle noted that universal essences involve potentiality and therefore can be considered as matter. He censured those who placed ideas as first, actual essences. Although this censure can be applied to the school of Plato, I do not think it can be applied to Plato himself.<sup>27</sup> In fact Aristotle acknowledges that Plato accepted act as prior to potency.<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, Plato establishes an *ideal matter*, and in the tenth

<sup>27</sup> Aristotle admits that universals are *logically* but not *physically* first: 'The most recent thinkers say that universals have a greater claim to be called substances. Genera are universals which, they assert, have a greater claim to be principles and substances, because these thinkers philosophised according to a logical view. But the most ancient authors held that individual things had the greater claim to be substances, like fire, earth, and not body in general' (*Metaph.*, 11 (12): 1). Later he says that some thinkers 'split immobile substance into two, while others placed both *forms* and *mathematical things* in one nature only, and some of them admitted only mathematical things' (ibid., 2). These are also the opinions of Senocrates and other disciples of Plato.

<sup>28</sup> 'Hence, some thinkers, like Leucippus and Plato, always posit action'\* (*Metaphysics*, 12: 6). This confusion of Plato with Leucippus is entirely innocent: Aristotle never says that Plato posited potency before act, but he does say the Pythagoreans and Speusippus did (*Metaph.*, 11 (12): 7). Clearly, he is attacking the disciple, not the master.



chapter of the *Republic* says essences are created by God's thought. This *ideal matter*, which is certainly *universal* being, is not Plato's God but, as I would call it, an element of his God. To know the first substance, the ancients used analysis, proposing the question: 'What are the elements or principles or causes that the first substance consists of?', as we know from Aristotle.<sup>29</sup> The difficulty was how to reconcile two equally evident things: 1. ideal, universal essences are eternal, and 2. they subsisted. It was the mystery of reason that philosophy could never totally solve — it required revelation to explain it.

To solve the problem, Plato made the greatest effort that human intelligence has ever made and could make: he reduced all essences to one only and placed it outside the world. According to him, this one essence made use of only the mind. He did not consider it therefore as a pure object but gave it subjective, personal being, but erred when he said that the mind proceeded from this essence — he should have said that the objective essence proceeded from the mind. His only example, however, was the human mind, which is constituted by the object, not vice versa, as in the case of God. It was perhaps also beyond human thought to ideate an ens where the mind would produce its actual, eternal object. In any case, Plato's first, supreme essence contained the mind and therefore had act; it was not a potency. Nevertheless, the great philosopher did not see the true relationship between this essence and this mind, nor their *identification*, nor the distinct personhood of the subject and object, as has been clearly revealed to us by revelation. If Plato endowed the first essence with a mind, surely he obviously admitted a first act prior to every potency? Aristotle places Anaxagoras among those who put act before potency precisely because he made the mind exist prior to every other thing. According to Aristotle, this mind is act ὁ γὰρ νοῦς, ἐνέργεια.<sup>30</sup> Plato certainly took the concept of mind from Anaxagoras.<sup>31</sup> Although he derived the mind from the first essence, he made the mind contemporary with the essence and indivisible from it, because the essence was always using the mind.

<sup>29</sup> Aristotle says this in *Metaph.*, 12: 1 ss.; *De Anima*, 1: 2.

<sup>30</sup> *Metaph.*, 11 (12): 6.

<sup>31</sup> Plato, *Phaed.*, p. 17, *Gorg.* p. 465.

1300. We must make a distinction between Aristotle's objections, which refer to Plato's disciples whose school came after Plato, and the objections referring to Plato himself. Aristotle does not reprove Plato for positing pure universals as first; he is refuting the Platonists for beginning from potential things and not from pure act. The problem he finds with Plato reduces to this: 'Time and motion are eternal. How do you explain them? What cause do you assign to them? There has to be an eternal cause always in act. You say that the soul is the cause of motion, but you make the soul posterior to Heaven. Hence, the moving agent, that is, the soul, has not always been, nor therefore has the cause of motion always been in act. You hold that motion was first in potency and then in act. So you begin from potency. But you cannot explain the cause of motion nor why there is this motion and also different motions, motion of nature, of impulse, of intellect, and which of these is the first.'<sup>32</sup> But Plato needed simply to deny Aristotle's supposition that time and motion have always been, and to say that their explanation is found in an actual cause which had produced the eternal, world movements. Plato certainly makes Heaven prior to the soul because the word 'Heaven', that supreme Heaven he calls Hyperuranus, is for him a metaphor, as it also was for those before him, and he understands it to be the first intelligence which has neither place nor local movement and is a totally pure act of contemplation. This Heaven is the Essence which uses the one mind to contemplate itself. He distinguishes the Gods of the people from this Essence, which is the true God of Plato. He does not acknowledge such Gods as Gods but admits them as an opinion and a manner of speaking, and explains them in his own way by considering them as stars. Jupiter is considered the greatest of these Gods, who, according to Hesiod, 'is son of Heaven'. Plato explains that this means he is son of 'a great intelligence',<sup>33</sup> that is, precisely the true God, the son of the pure Essence which uses the only mind and, in symbolic language, is

<sup>32</sup> *Metaph.*, 11 (12): 6.

<sup>33</sup> μεγάλης τινὸς διάνοιας ἐκγονον εἶναι τὸν Δία — ἔστι δὲ οὗτος Οὐρανοῦ υἱός, ὡς λόγος (*Cratyl.*, p. 396). This ὡς λόγος clearly demonstrates that Plato considered this opinion about Jupiter as popular belief and as a certain way of speaking, but not as a philosophical dictate.

called Heaven. Plato gives a soul and body to these popular Gods because they are only stars from which, he grants, the other souls and bodies come, and all of them form 'a great animal'. The intelligible essence of this animal is in Heaven, that is, it is the knowledge belonging to the supreme mind that the sole Essence uses and is its offspring. This intelligible essence of the World, woven from all the ideas of the things of the world including their connections, is the Exemplar of the world, which explains why the Exemplar is called ζῶον [image].<sup>34</sup> If we grant therefore the creation of the soul, which of itself has the power to choose motion or rest, then its constitution and the resulting laws explain motion and rest as well as the diversity of all local movements. The only thing still to be explained is something that needs no explanation, because Aristotle presupposes a false fact, the eternity of local motion. He found a difficulty where there is none and, to explain an imaginary fact, had recourse to an imaginary hypothesis: he imagined that the eternal world had an eternal appetite towards eternal, motionless substance, and posited the universal cause of motion in this appetite. But because the appetite is either nothing or a potency of the soul, he also granted that the cause of motion was in the soul. The only other important difference is that he makes souls eternal, while Plato makes them created. This difference between the two systems concerns the eternity of the world, not the concept of God (*Del divino nella natura* [fn. 32 ss.]; *Aristotele esposto ed esaminato*, [fn. to 317]). It has nothing to do therefore with the teaching about universals (as I said, the arguments about this teaching are presented more by the disciples than by the master). Aristotle failed here because he wanted to unite the world to God with necessary bonds; he did not understand that the world, as something contingent, depended on God's free will.

1301. Consequently, if Aristotle's God is considered in his relationship with the world, he becomes a very wretched thing, without action, without providence. In the world he has an eternal emulator, as it were, like himself, who uses the world without God having any knowledge about it. But if we remove this distortion and consider Aristotle's God *in se*, abstracting

<sup>34</sup> *Timaeus*, p. 39. Cf. *De Rep.*, 6, p. 500.

from the world, he becomes magnificent. In fact the description Aristotle gives of this God in Book 12 of the *Metaphysics* is uniquely sublime, but it contains nothing that does not come from the school of Plato. Aristotle's contribution is his wise synthesis of scattered concepts, accomplished with an extraordinary brevity and speed of language. He says:

The Mind understands itself by assuming what is intelligible: it makes itself intelligible by apprehending and understanding. Thus, the mind and the intelligible are the same thing. The mind is that which can receive the intelligible and the essence (τοῦ νοητοῦ καὶ οὐσίᾳς), and then, when it has these, it acts. Consequently the former (the intelligible) rather than the latter (the receptivity) seems to be the divine element possessed by the mind. Speculation is what is most pleasant and best. If therefore God always has such a good ability, as we sometimes do, it is a wonderful thing. And if he has a still better ability, it is more wonderful. But this is precisely what happens. Life is also present because the act of the mind is life, and the mind itself is act. Moreover, the act is *in se* the supremely good and eternal life of the mind. We say therefore that God is eternal, supremely good and lives. Hence, in God there is life and continuous, eternal time. This is what God is.<sup>35</sup>

The magnificent simplicity and sublimity of these words are such that no greater sublimity is found in the work of any pagan philosopher; it is pure gold extracted from the mine of the master.

A few observations. The philosopher considers the mind as susceptible of the intelligible and of essence (τὸ γὰρ δεκτικὸν τοῦ νοητοῦ καὶ οὐσίᾳς). This union of the *intelligible* and *essence* is totally platonic. Aristotle, like Plato, understands 'being' as what is in the object of the mind, that is, the intelligible. But this essence, object of the mind, can be either real and subsistent or purely ideal. Hence Aristotle distinguishes two kinds of essences: first essences and second essences. The first are real, individual, intelligible entities; the second are ideal, universal, intelligible entities, that is, species and genera.<sup>36</sup> Although he

<sup>35</sup> *Metaph.*, 11 (12): 7.

<sup>36</sup> *Cat.*, 5.

says against the Platonists that universals are not the first, he cannot say the same against Plato, who sees God as contemplating himself from eternity and hence contemplating a complete, subsistent object. Plato, who wanted to explain the origin of the world from God, sees God, in the act of contemplating himself, as producing the exemplar of the world. Aristotle does not conceive how the world can have had a beginning and so, through ignorance and not based on any reason, makes it eternal. As a result, he needs no exemplar: he encloses God in a sterile contemplation of himself, defining him as ‘an intellection, which is an intellection of an intellection’ (καὶ ἔστιν ἡ νόησις νόησεως νόησις).<sup>37</sup> This definition involves an infinite circle when subjectivity is not accepted as a form distinct from objectivity, as I have shown elsewhere (*Aristotele*, [n. 351]). How then could Aristotle explain the existence of the ideas of the things of the world? The greatest difficulty in their explanation consisted in their being necessary and eternal. He therefore thought he had found their mode in the eternity of the world. In this world he posited something necessary and eternal: *forms*, whether separate or united to matter, existed eternally. The separate forms are minds, while the forms united to matter are the other non-mind things. Minds separated these forms, and ideas were separate. I have already examined this system (*Aristotele* [n. 317]), so I will not repeat what I said.

1302. However, we must note that by calling the mind ‘that which can receive (τὸ δεκτικόν) the intelligible and essence’, he maintains the distinction between the mind and its object which is the intelligible. This is seen in an earlier part where, as I have already quoted, he says, ‘Intellection is a principle. The mind is then moved by the intelligible. Moreover, the intelligible is another order *per se*’ (νοητὸν δὲ ἡ ἑτέρα συστοιχεία καθ’ αὐτήν).<sup>38</sup> Mind and intelligible entities are therefore two series and such *per se*. Hence minds are not produced by intelligible entities, nor intelligible entities by minds. This independent and *per se* existing nature which Aristotle constantly grants to intelligible entities is more than platonic. According to Plato, essences certainly have an absolute existence but he distinguishes the essences of

<sup>37</sup> *Metaph.*, 11 (12): 9.

<sup>38</sup> *Metaph.*, 11 (12): 7.

world things which, for him, are produced by the divine mind, from the essence of God, of which he calls the divine mind offspring. Aristotle, on the other hand, acknowledges minds and intelligible entities as distinct series. Intelligibles draw the mind to the act of *intellection* (νοῦς δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ νοητοῦ κινεῖται). Hence, the mind *per se* is a potency (τὸ δεκτικόν), and the intelligible is that which calls it into act. The intelligible, as cause of the mind's act, is consequently all the more divine than the mind is. I therefore think that the words ὥστε ἐκεῖνο μᾶλλον τούτου, ὃ δοκεῖ ὁ νοῦς θεῖον ἔχειν [hence it is actuality rather than potentiality that is held to be the divine possession of rational thought] refer to the intelligible and the mind.

However, because he calls intellection a 'principle' (ἀρχὴ γὰρ ἡ νόησις) and considers it absolutely as act prior to potency, we must conceive the Aristotelian mind in this way: there are indeed *minds* and also separate *intelligibles*, that is, minds as potency and intelligibles as potency — these are the minds and intelligibles of the world. But prior to these there is a first intellection (whether they are one or many is a separate question for Aristotle) and this first intellection is God. It results from two elements which, because always united, are always one thing, that is, an act of intellection; they are the mind (τὸ δεκτικόν) and the intelligible (τὸ νοητόν). But because they are united by contact and by understanding (θιγγάνων καὶ νοῶν), they remain different natures such that the mind, as having, operates (ἐνεργεῖ δὲ ἔχων). But having is not being. If the mind operates, that is, carries out the act of intellection by having the intelligible, it is not, as such, the intelligible. Now, according to an obviously misapplied principle of Aristotle, the level of intellection is proportionate to the level of the intelligible. If therefore, through its object, intellection is better, so must the intelligible be better. In the series of intelligibles, the first intelligible is substance, and the first substance is substance simply and in act.\*<sup>39</sup> The first, and also the best, intellection must be

<sup>39</sup> *Metaph.*, 11 (12): 7. Here, Aristotle hastens to say that 'substance simply as such' is not the same as saying 'the only substance'. He thus leaves the field open for allowing more than one of the always existent intellections, that is, more Gods, as he does in the following chapter. This inclines me to think that this chapter is also Aristotle's.

intellection itself. God must therefore be 'the intellection of his own intellection'. Thus, intellection and the intelligible identify.

But I do not want to spend any more time making observations about this system, and I refer the reader to what I said in the book I wrote under the title of Aristotle. Returning to my purpose, I note that not even Aristotle (and still less Plato) could conceive even with some proximity the constitution of eternal, absolute Being as manifested by revelation. Although we certainly see a species of trinity in the Aristotelian concept (there is intellection and in it mind and the intelligible) — intellection is the result of the union of these two potential elements, and the mind operates through the intelligible and essence (νοῦς δὲ ὑπο τοῦ νοητοῦ κινεῖται). This is precisely Plato's thought when he said that the mind (in act) was offspring of the objective essence. We know (and reason itself understands it must be so) that on the contrary the intelligible is generated by the infinite Mind-subject that is always intelligent and affirming itself object. Moreover, neither Plato nor Aristotle could understand that the intelligible generated by the ever actually intelligent mind had to be a living, subsistent person, different from the person that had generated it and like the other, containing everything in itself. The human intellect never attained such an immeasurable height!

## Article 9

### Typification and typical concept

1303. Returning to our argument, I was saying that between the infinite object and the finite object in the mind's operation there are two concepts: *matter* and *positive limit*. By limit I mean the limit added to or imposed on matter (which is the determinable undetermined) in the form of terminative essence.

However, such limits can be imposed on matter in two ways: either as *partial* or *complete determinations*. The latter fully determine the matter, which thus acquires the condition of ens. I call this last operation united to the previous operations *typification*, because it gives to the mind the *type* of a complete ens, a full species.

If we consider that in all this operation this type is drawn from the infinite object by the different operations I have described (carried out by the divine mind with only one act), then the resulting finite object can also be called a typical abstract, and the total operation can be called *typical abstraction*, as I have said.

#### Article 10

The rule according to which the eternal mind composed the finite types of world entia from the two elements, matter and limit

1304. Only *real matter* is therefore directly limitable by the mind. Objective matter, moral matter and being (act) are matters which do not receive limits *in se*; they admit only two limits: the limit of *virtuality*, which is proper to them as matter, and the *limit of relationship* with the limited, that is, with limited, real matter. The *subject*, which is the first act of an ens, also receives a limit from *real matter* but this limit is not a *limit of simple relationship with some other thing but a limit of naturation*, because the subject constitutes one and the same nature with the real essence whose principle the subject is.

But as I said, the mind, in imposing limits on the real essence, must follow some rule because not every imposed limit is a complete determination or can constitute the type of an ens. Hence, the question: what is this *rule* that stood before the eternal Mind in the typification of finite entia?

It could not be other than the abstract I have called *common ens*. In fact, all the conditions of ens are in this abstract, that is, in the concept of ens. The wish therefore to compose some entia from matter by imposing limits on it required that the imposition fulfilled all the conditions or essential constitutives of ens, which are contained precisely in the concept of ens.

This concept primarily demonstrates that an ens cannot be an ens unless it has the three elements of subject, act and terminative essence. The subject and terminative essence are the two elements I have called principle and term. The subject is the



first act proper to an ens. This act contains all that is in the ens, that is, the terminative essence. What then does the third element do that I have called 'act'? It is *being* itself and, as we have seen, must be called the act of the act, that is, the universal act of the act proper to the finite ens. It is not the finite subject but is that which as antecedent principle gives existence (actuality) to the finite subject (the first act proper to ens).

Note however, we are talking about the formation of the eternal types of finite entia, not their realisation. It is certainly being that gives these types objective intelligibility because the mind cannot intuit them outside of being, *per se* intelligible and, by abstraction, made determinable, ideal and first matter.

1304a. *Common ens* therefore, taken as the rule for the formation of the typical ens, manifests to the mind everything that must be present to constitute an ens. One of these essential conditions is, as I said, the presence of a first act-subject together with a terminative essence and objective being. It is objective being that gives to the typical ens intelligibility or objectivity as well as its basis, because objective being [is] the infinite object containing all types and finite objects. But this is not enough. The rule of common ens also demonstrates that no ens can exist unless it is *one*, that is, undivided in itself and, relative to its existence, separate from everything else. This cannot happen unless 1. the subject form an undivided one with the terminative essence, and 2. the terminative essence be fully determined by its limits.

In this way the eternal mind sees in abstract *ens* all the conditions essential for constituting typical entia.

The subject forms an undivided one with the terminative essence when it is a first act that contains all the terminative essence. But how does the terminative essence, which is real matter, receive the limits that determine it?

In whatever way it receives them, it will always become an ens if the limits leave nothing undetermined in the terminative essence. However, this determined terminative essence, which is what I have called the *term* of an ens, can be determined and yet contain potentiality, in which the *potencies* of the finite ens have their origin, as I have explained in *Psychology* (2: 854–864).

As we see, the only essential condition (besides those already

discussed) required by the typical finite ens for constituting a finite ens is that the terminative essence receives limits that will determine it in every way. Granted this condition, the number of finite typical entia extractable from the terminative essence is as great as the determinations when these are complete in every way and can be received by the essence. Real matter has in fact a susceptibility to receive all these complexes of fully determining limits that are called *constitutive forms* of finite ens. This susceptibility is precisely what I earlier called *virtuality*.

1305. These *possible forms constitutive* of the finite ens are certainly not determined in number, but we can reasonably ask whether they are of an *infinite* or *finite number*.

Terminative real matter, contained in the concept (because we are dealing with a reality existing in the concept, a reality which has not yet emerged with its own existence), is neither infinite, because abstraction deprived it of the subject, nor finite. But through the action of the mind it retains a virtuality to become both an infinite ens and finite entia. This virtuality is the virtuality of the terminative matter to become such entia by receiving the possible constitutive finite forms. The question therefore concerns these forms, and asks: 'Are the constitutive finite forms of typical entia infinite'. The plurality of the forms comes from limitation and not from matter, which does not give but receives the limit. But limitation can never have an unlimited effect. Consequently, if the *plurality* comes from limitation as a result of limitation and is itself a limitation, it follows that it cannot be infinite. Therefore, typical entia cannot be infinite in number, but be of so great a number that they exceed human thought.

Hence, because possible typical entia are finite in number, we are not obliged to suppose that the infinite mind is indifferent as to which it intuit, or that its preference is totally arbitrary. On the contrary, it is more in harmony with the attributes of wisdom and divine love that the eternal, free Mind directs itself to them all and produces them all, and that through their natural relationships they have a wonderful order with each other, which gives all of them objective unity. This is the exemplar of the world, the wisdom created from the beginning and before the ages.

The determinative form also supposes a quality and a quantity, as I said in the previous book.

### Article 11

Summing up, we can conclude that the multiplicity of types does not remove the unity and perfect simplicity of the eternal, intellective act which is God

1306. All the possible types and their order are *ab aeterno* in the divine intellection. If this were not the case, the intellection would not be perfect and infinite. St. Thomas says that God

knows his own essence perfectly and knows it in every knowable way. However, it can be known not only as it is in itself but as shareable by creatures through a kind of likeness [*App.*, no. 2]. Each creature has its own species and, according to this, shares in some way in the likeness of the divine essence. Thus, in so far as God knows his own essence as imitable in such a way by the creature, he knows his essence as the nature and idea proper to this creature. And similarly for the other creatures. Hence clearly God understands many natures proper to many things, and these natures are many ideas.

But God, with one, eternal and immutable act of intellection, an act which he himself is, knows both his unlimited essence and the essence he knows with all the typical limitations that his essence can receive. Hence, the whole multiplicity of these terms together with the above-mentioned operations by which the terms are formed do not prejudice the simplicity of the divine nature nor the unicity of the act which is the divine nature.

1307. Reasons for possible doubt about the divine simplicity were two: 1. the multitude of the operations I described in order to explain typification, and 2. the multitude of types — if these were distinguished in God, there would be a multitude and a multiplicity in the divine nature and intelligence.

However the multitude of the operations I described disappear, provided we know that one act alone can do as much as a

multitude of operations and intellectual acts, although the latter have a priority and posteriority whether logical or of any other kind. We conceive a multitude of acts simply to explain a multiple effect. If the power of an ens can directly bring about a multiple effect, it produces the effect with one sole act. Hence, it is the limited, imperfect mode of the operator that necessarily makes many acts obtain a multiple effect or many effects simultaneously. There is no intrinsic contradiction however if these effects are directly obtained with one most powerful and perfect act. Even in ourselves we can see intelligence operating in two ways: in one way it attains the term and desired effect through many operations; in the other, it obtains the same term and effect either with a much less number of operations or with a single act. I gave an example of this in *Psychology* when speaking about synthetical reasoning (2: 1686–1697).

In regard to the multitude of types, I have already observed in the previous book, where I presented the theory of simplicity, that their multitude is simply the multitude of the finite entia (together with their relationships) created by God; and the subject of this multitude are the finite entia themselves really existing *in se*. God therefore does not see the multiplicity proper to these types, a multiplicity of which he himself is the subject, but a multiplicity of something else, that is, of relative entia. Hence, because multitude and multiplicity pertain to relative entia as subjects of such predicates, they have a multiplicity of relationships, that is, of likenesses with the one divine essence, so that the foundation of the *multiplicity* of these likenesses is not in God but solely in finite entia — in God there is only the one, most simple term of the relationships.

1308. It is of no avail to respond that God, knowing the multiplicity of these likenesses, must receive in his mind a multitude of objects which make his mind, as it were, a patchwork and hence truly multiple. To say this would be a clear sign that we do not conceive the creative act in its true being. We must keep in mind that the creative act does two things simultaneously: it creates by positing finite entia in being, and produces their types. In God, one of these things is certainly not prior to the other (the creative act is eternal); they are simultaneous and

identical. God, knowing, creates: to know is to create. The likeness of finite entia with the divine essence therefore is created with finite entia, but in God the entia are not prior to the likeness nor is the likeness prior to them — they are in time where they have a relative existence, whereas the likeness is in God *ab aeterno*): to create entia is the same as to see their likeness. God creates entia indeed with one act only, and hence together with them, with one act, he co-creates the relationships of likenesses that they have with the divine essence. But these likenesses have their multiplicity in the finite entia, not in the divine essence, which is only the term of the multiplicity of these relationships of likeness. Consequently, if the act creative of finite entia posits no multiplicity in the creator, still less do their likenesses or eternal types.

This reply to the objection brought against what I said can be expressed in another way.

To know that something is multiple does not mean that the knower is multiple; the multiplicity or multitude is known not as something proper to the knower but as something in something else. Someone may object that in this case there are *many known things*, and *many known things*, because known, are in the mind, therefore the mind is multiple because there are *many things* in it. This comment, however, has no validity: *many known things* in the mind are there as objects, and objects are not subjects; on the contrary, an object is the opposite of a subject. Multiplicity on the other hand is predicated solely of a *subject*. Hence, the objects can be many without the subject (the mind) being multiple.

1309. The objector may still insist that the object itself is something of the mind, and therefore multiplicity of the object must bring some multiplicity to the mind. This objection disappears if we carefully consider the nature of the mental object and do not confuse it with the nature of the subject. The object has two relationships and hence admits two concepts. One relationship is with the mind in so far as it is the proper term of the mind and as such is of the same substance as the mind. The other relationship is with what it presents, and in our case it presents finite entia. Thus, considered as the essential term of the divine mind, it is simply the finalisation of that mind's act and therefore identical with the intellectual divine act and

divine essence. But considered as presenting finite entia, it appears as multiple, that is, it becomes as many objects or types as the finite entia it presents. The whole question therefore consists in considering the nature of this presentation of many finite entia. Obviously the object presents this or that ens in so far as the mind considers the object in relationship with this or that ens, which means precisely to consider it as representative. Whether the object actually presents this or that ens depends on the act of the mind that considers it as presenting this or that ens. Hence, we can conceive as many acts of the mind as there are finite entia, and by means of these intellective acts (which are simultaneously creative), the object will present them all. Through these presentations the object now seems to become many objects but this is an illusion. The truth is that, although the object remains only one, there are many intellective acts which make it present many objects. This apparent multitude of objects reduces therefore to a multitude of acts of the mind that considers the object differently. We have seen that many acts of a mind can be reduced to one single act that is equivalent to many acts, and obtain the same effect as many acts. This is what must happen in a most perfect mind, because it is a property of perfection to obtain everything with a single act, while imperfection and limitation need many acts. In God there is only one object and also only one act of the divine mind. The one sole object (the divine essence) has the virtue to present many finite entia; and one sole act of the divine mind (which again is the divine essence), in making this one object (itself) present many finite entia, creates these in their own relative existence.

To understand more easily how one sole object can present many things through the mind's activity, let us suppose I had the power to create things similar to myself. Clearly, if by different acts of my mind I could take from myself the example and type of many things, I could create not only entia that are completely equal to me but souls and bodies, different parts of the body, souls with different levels of intelligence, large or small bodies, irrational animals, etc. I would be the sole exemplar of all these things, the sole object into which the mind has looked. But with different acts the mind has taken from this one object the representation of the things it creates. In the case

of the divine mind, it takes from itself (one absolute object) all the types it wishes, not by different acts but by one, most simple act. These types, relative to the divine mind, are the finalisation of its one act. Outside of the divine mind, they are real entia, each with a relative existence to itself — I say each, because in relative existence each has become a subject, and is no longer an object.

## CHAPTER 4

### The nature of the first cause; important corollaries resulting from it

#### Article 1

##### The truth and energy of the divine intellective act

1310. In the previous chapter we saw how the eternal Mind, the first cause, can conceive finite entia; I called this 'typification'. We must now see how these entia come into their own relative existence through the action of the first cause, an action I call 'creation'. As I have noted, this great fact must be treated one part at a time. The discussion must concern first the creation of finite persons and secondly the creation of impersonal things, which refer to persons. In the discussion, I will make use of what has already been said.

What I said was: God is being, and the nature of being is to be mind, most actual mind, that is, pure intellection.

This intellective act, which being is, understands itself as essential object, and in itself as sole object understands finite entia, which are complete entia when they have personal being.

Because this intellective act is totally perfect, its energy is also total. Consequently, understanding itself, it does not remain purely an internal object of the intellection but the understood entity acquires a personal subsistence proper to itself, called Word. Indeed, if the intellective act has itself in fact as object, and this object remained simply a term and final point of the intellection without subsisting with its own personal subsistence, the intellection would not be infinite and totally perfect; the divine essence, which is the understood entity, would not be fully understood because, even though the intelligent divine essence subsists, the understood entity would not subsist. Consequently, the understood entity, as understood, would not be the divine essence but a likeness or idea. But a likeness or idea does not make a thing known fully as it is in itself. To know fully something that exists *in se*, the thing as understood must



subsist, that is, the intellective act must be such that it can produce not only a simple object for itself but an object equal to the thing it wants to understand. And because the thing that the divine intellection wants to understand is its total self as personally existing, the thing understood, as understood, must have a personal existence equal to the same intelligent essence. Thus, there are two persons, each having the same intellection. I said the same about the third person, who is the same essence personally existing as loved essence through the perfection of the act of love.

This procession of the persons necessarily follows from the absolute perfection of the volitive, intellective act: granted this perfection, we must accept the processions. This is also true if we consider that this volitive, intellective act is *being* itself, and being can have only being as term of its act, because the act is totally and solely indivisible, unlimitable being.

The infinite energy of this intellective act makes the act perfectly *true* because it attains its object, which is itself, to such a full extent that it produces its object as a subsistent *understood entity*, just as it produces it as a subsistent loved entity. Hence, the Word, made man, calls the Father *true: est VERUS qui misit me* [he who sent me is TRUE].<sup>40</sup>

1311. The same must be said about the creation of finite entia. We have seen how the divine intellective act thinks finite entia as objects and how these could not be distinct objects in the divine mind if they were not distinct in their own subsistence. We saw that in the divine mind there are not, strictly speaking, many distinct objects but one sole object and that the creative act of the divine mind is the act which, equivalent to many acts, sees this one sole object as *presenting* everything finite that the creative act wants to see in the object. This knowledge, which theologians call *knowledge of vision* or of *approbation*, is that with which the divine mind knows finite, perfectly subsistent ens, and to know this is to create it. Granted that God, intellective act, wishes to know in himself a finite ens (let us say here a person), then clearly the object of this act of totally perfect knowledge could be only that subsistent person. An imperfect likeness or species of the person would not be sufficient — pure

<sup>40</sup> Jn 7: 28.

likeness and species certainly make known something of a person but not the real, subsistent person in himself.<sup>41</sup> Hence, the known person, if God is to know him perfectly, must be in a totally perfect mode in God. As St. Thomas aptly says: 'The more perfectly the known thing is in the knower, the more perfect is the mode of knowledge.'<sup>42</sup>

1312. This is not the case for us who have an imperfect knowledge. In order to know subsistent entities we require two acts: intuition of the species followed by an *act of affirmation*. The first act gives us an imperfect knowledge, that is, knowledge of ens as possible. This is not yet ens as nature requires it to be, because an ens, a person, must be *in se* in order to be person.<sup>43</sup> We must add a second *act of affirmation*, which we do when we have sense-perception of a person. But *sense-perception* is simply the action done on us by some other thing. It is an effect produced in us, which is not the whole of the agent. We use it as a *sign* for knowing the existence of the agent, which is the cause of the effect. It is clear therefore that the subsistence of a person is not known to us directly as the person is *in se*, but by a transition that our mind makes from the *sign* and effect to the thing *signed* and the cause. In itself, this cause is not known to us; it is not in us as such; we simply make its existence known by the affirmation we add to the species. If however the case concerns a person, we argue to his nature by transferring into the ens whose existence we have known, the form of our person, of which alone we have positive knowledge. This is imperfect knowledge because we do not yet directly know the *reality* of the other person but only think that it must be like ours.

God's totally perfect knowledge cannot be of this kind. His knowledge, because totally perfect, must also know the *reality proper* to each person and each finite ens. Consequently, we

<sup>41</sup> 'Understanding something generally and not in particular is to know it imperfectly'\* (St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 6).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> 'When our intellect is brought from potency into act, it acquires a general, confused knowledge about things, before it knows them in particular. It proceeds from the imperfect to the perfect, as is clear in the first book of Physics. Hence, if God's knowledge about other things were in itself purely general and not particular, his understanding, and therefore his being, would not be perfect in every respect'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 6).

must say that reality, which is the obscure part of human knowledge, is perfectly known in God. Reality, in so far as the reality of someone else, is known by us only through the affirmation we pronounce as a result of a *sign* we receive of the other, such as the sensation produced in us. On the other hand, our own reality is known through our feeling of it and through intellective affirmation. In God however, the reality proper to finite entities must be known with one sole act which is simultaneously intuitive, imaginative and affirmative; the reality must also be known as subsistent, and made subsistent by this totally perfect act by which it is known.<sup>44</sup> As I said, subsistence in itself is essential to finite ens. Hence a finite ens cannot be perfectly known unless known in that which perfectly constitutes it, that is, its subsistence. In short therefore, we would have to either deny that God knows finite entities or grant him this knowledge only imperfectly or admit that his perfect knowledge of finite entia is a creative act which makes its object subsistent such that the subsistence *in se* of finite entia follows from the perfection of divine intelligence.

1313. This teaching clarifies and determines the meaning of some difficult expressions used by philosophers and theologians. They say that all things are in God, not only what things have in common but what distinguishes them from each other, and their reality is also in God.<sup>45</sup> They say that finite things are in the knowledge of God their cause,<sup>46</sup> and that finite entia have

<sup>44</sup> Because the active virtue of God extends not only to the forms by which general understanding is received but also to the matter, God's knowledge must extend to individual things individuated through matter. Hence, because he knows things other than himself through his essence, in so far as it is the likeness of things or their active principle, his essence must be the sufficient principle for knowing all things made through him, not only in general but in particular. A craftsman would have similar knowledge, if it produced the whole thing and not just the form\* (St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 11). In this passage St. Thomas argues that God knows matter because he is its creative cause. My reasoning proceeds in the opposite direction: I argue that he is the creative cause because he perfectly knows real entia and therefore knows their reality and matter.

<sup>45</sup> Thus, everything pre-exists in God, not only what is common to them all but also what distinguishes them\* (St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 6).

<sup>46</sup> God's knowledge is the cause of things because things are in knowledge\* (Ibid., art. 8, ad 2).

a *double being*: *natural being* and *intelligible being*. They also say that in natural agents the form of the thing to be made pre-exists as *natural being*, while in entia which act through intellect, the form pre-exists as *intelligible being*, just as the form of a house pre-exists in an architect's or builder's mind. They call this intelligible being *likeness*,<sup>47</sup> by which they certainly mean the likeness of natural being.

I want to look critically at these different expressions, remove any possible equivocation, and determine their true meaning. First of all, saying that finite entia are *in God* or in the *knowledge of God* means the same because, as they say, in God *intelligere est esse* [to understand is to be].<sup>48</sup> If therefore finite entia are in the knowledge of God, that is, in God's understanding, which means they are in God who is subsistent intellection, they have an *intelligible being*. This intelligible being does not differ from God himself because it is the divine act, that is, the divine essence. What has been said in a very general sense is verified in God: 'Understanding is not an action progressing to something external; it remains in the agent as the agent's act and perfection, in the way that being is the perfection of existence. Indeed, just as being follows form, so understanding follows intelligible species.'<sup>49</sup> As I say, a very general sense was given to this statement because, although fully verified only in God, it is not fully verified in other intellects — the only thing known absolutely and *per se* knowable is being. However, according to St. Thomas, who wrote the above statement, finite ens is neither being nor its own being: *nulla forma vel natura creata est suum esse* [no created form or nature is its being].<sup>50</sup> If therefore only being is intelligible, and other things are intelligible solely

<sup>47</sup> In certain agents the form of the thing to be made pre-exists according to NATURAL BEING, as in things that act through nature, for example, a human being generates a human being, fire generates fire. In other agents, however, it is INTELLIGIBLE BEING, as in things that act through intellect, for example, the likeness of a house pre-exists in the mind of the builder'\* (S. T., I, q. 14, art. 6).

<sup>48</sup> Because, as is said, his essence is also intelligible species, it necessarily follows that his understanding is his essence and his being'\* (St. Thomas, q. 14, art. 4).

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> St. Thomas, *De pot.*, 2: 1.

through and in being, if no created ens is its own being, and if intellect can understand solely what is *intelligible*, then no intellective ens which is not being can understand anything unless it exits itself and unites to being which is something other. Through this conjunction with something other the intellective ens becomes intelligent. God, on the contrary, because he is being itself, has the intelligible in himself and does not draw the intelligible object from elsewhere; he himself is the intelligible because he is being. Thus, what Aristotle said very generally is verified solely of him, namely, that *intelligibile in actu est intellectus in actu* [the intelligible in act is the intellect in act].<sup>51</sup> We take ourselves in fact conceive the act of understanding (taking the example from ourselves) as the union between understanding and what is understood, as if understanding were the effect of this union.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, for us, understanding and what is understood are two distinct things that are also considered separately. In this case therefore, each of them in potency yet united remains truly distinct but not separate. In this union the only thing that subsists is the understanding in act, as a subject individually united to an object that is not the understanding. But God is *actual understanding*;<sup>53</sup> he is more than intelligent or intelligible. As I said, he is intelligent in finalised act, which I call *per se understood*. Consequently, in between the creatures' understanding (in addition to the intelligent subject) and the understood real entity lies the *species* which is the objective form that actuates the intelligent, but is not the intelligent; it is what is *per se* intelligible, that is, being, and hence what our understanding directly understands.<sup>54</sup> In and through it we

<sup>51</sup> *De Anima*, 3: 6 [App., no. 3].

<sup>52</sup> 'Because what is understood is one with the understanding, to understand is, as it were, a certain effect different from both'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 54, art. 1, ad 3). 'Knowing something about the nature of what it is to understand is to know what understanding and understood are'\* (*Op. de intellectu et intelligib.*).

<sup>53</sup> 'Only divine being is its own understanding and its own willing'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 54, art. 2).

<sup>54</sup> In his analysis of human understanding, St. Thomas distinguishes between the *principium quo* and the *principium quod*. The *principium quo*, he says, is the *species* by which the human being understands, the *principium quod* is the thing itself *understood* by means of the species. This is true when

understand real entities with an act that has a different nature, that is, affirmation and predication. But God does not need a *species* different from himself to understand, because he himself is intelligible and understood *per se*, and is so because he is being itself, which alone is intelligible, and only in him are other things intelligible. Hence God understands his own essence, and together with his essence other finite things, as I have said. But if he wishes to understand these other finite things, he must see them in his essence where they are virtually included. If he wishes to see them distinctly and actually, which is in his power, he must distinguish and actuate them. But granted that in order to see them he distinguishes and actuates them with the energy of his intellective act, they already exist *in se*, which means they are created; they do not pre-exist and therefore cannot be known. They can be known solely with this act with which they are created; only as created are they distinct from the divine essence and from each other. Also, the only practical knowledge possible in God of non-existent finite entities is virtual.<sup>55</sup>

‘understood thing’ means the *finite real*. The finite real, although not *per se* intelligible, must be made intelligible by what is *per se* intelligible, and this is being. Being, in as far as it makes real things known, is called *species* when referred to real things. But we must not think that the species is that by which the real is understood, unless the species is first and directly understood. Rather, the species is the thing *directly understood* by the human mind, while the real is the thing *indirectly understood*. St. Thomas also acknowledges this: ‘That which is PER SE UNDERSTOOD is not the thing’ (that is, the finite real thing) ‘Information about this is given THROUGH THE UNDERSTANDING,’ (that is, through the species) ‘because the thing is understood only when in potency and outside the knower who understands, as when the human being understands natural things’ (these are the finite real entities) ‘— because however the UNDERSTOOD’ (that which is understood *per se*, being, species) ‘must be in the knower and be one with him, nor is what is understood *per se* also the likeness of the understood thing through which the understanding is informed to understand’\* (*De intellectu et intelligibili*). Hence, the first thing understood by the human understanding is the *species*, that is, being, intelligible *per se*. Finite real entities are understood through this species, and that is why it is called *intelligendi principium* [principle of understanding] or *principium quo* [principle by which].

<sup>55</sup> ‘The only practical knowledge God has of things that neither are nor will be nor act, is virtual. Relative to these, therefore, there is no idea in God in the sense that idea means exemplar, but only in the sense that idea means concept’\* (St. Thomas, *S.T.*, S. I, q. 15, art 3, ad 2). By ‘concept’ St. Thomas understands ‘the principle of knowledge of (something), according to which

1314. In God, therefore, there are no species;<sup>56</sup> their place is taken by the one divine essence which is both that which can understand and the *per se* understood. But if God is not granted the distinct *species* of each created ens *with which* he can know each ens, *ideas* are usually attributed to him. Here, *idea* is not understood as that with which a thing is known but the *form apart* from the thing, and this form is what is known. St. Thomas in fact defines ideas: 'Ideas are understood as forms of other things independent of the things' existence.'<sup>57</sup> But we must carefully consider that if the idea is the form of other things, that is, the form apart from the existing things, anyone who knows this form does not know the things in their own subsistence but only the formal part of the things existing *in se*. Hence, ideas understood in this sense are not sufficient to explain the knowledge God has of existing individual things. Nor is it valid to define idea as Cajetan does: *ratio objectiva rei* [the objective concept of a thing].<sup>58</sup> The objective concept of a thing does not make known whether the thing subsists or not. St. Thomas adds that an idea serves two purposes: either as an *exemplar* of the thing whose form it is, or as a *principle of knowledge* of the thing in so far as the forms of knowable things are said to be in the knower.<sup>59</sup> Hence, if the idea, which is one sole thing, serves two purposes (*ad duo esse potest*), that is, for producing as exemplar and for knowing as a principle of knowledge, it is also 'a principle with which we know'. But according

the forms of knowable things are said to be in the knower'\* (ibid. 1). In God, things that he has not distinguished in creating them have no distinction, as St. Thomas teaches: 'The relationships that God is said to have to the creature are not really in him'\* (*De pot.*, q. 7, art 10). Thus, God's knowledge of simple, possible real entities is purely the knowledge of his own power (cf. *Rinnovamento*). Nevertheless we must not think that all the relationships of created things are of merely possible entities; relationships are co-created with these and are therefore already distinguished by the divine mind.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, *S.T.*, q. 14, art. 2, ad 2 and 3.

<sup>57</sup> *S.T.*, I, q. 15, art. 1.

<sup>58</sup> *In S.T.*, I, q. 15, art. 3, *quo ad secundum*.

<sup>59</sup> 'The form of the thing in addition to its existence can serve two purposes: either as an exemplar of what it is said to be the form or as the principle of knowledge by which the forms of knowable things are said to be in the knower'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 15, art. 1).

to St. Thomas, the principle with which we know is the *species*, 'by which the understanding comes into act. This likeness' (that is, the species) 'is present in the understanding as the principle of understanding.'<sup>60</sup> The idea is therefore the species when we use it as the principle of knowledge.

1314a. The distinction which Cajetan makes between the principle of knowledge as informing the intellect (he calls it *species*) and the principle of knowledge as understood form, which he calls *idea*,<sup>61</sup> cannot be upheld; the *understood form* is precisely what informs the intellect and therefore is both *species* and *idea*. Distinctions must not be uselessly multiplied; their multiplication clutters philosophy, turning it into sophistry. In fact the nature of the intellect is such that the only form it admits is the objective, although this form can be seen in two ways: as the internal term and form of the intellectual act, and as the intellectual principle of another thing or of another mode of being. For this reason St. Thomas, in many places, is not worried about using *species* for *idea*.<sup>62</sup> He also acknowledges that what informs the intellect (*principium quo*) is the first thing that the intellect understands (*principium quod*) and, he says, is *per se* understood.<sup>63</sup> We must conclude therefore that when St.

<sup>60</sup> *De intellectu et intelligibili*.

<sup>61</sup> 'Similarly, when he literally said that an idea is the principle of knowledge, he immediately added a limitation according to which the forms of knowable things are said to be in the knower, as if to say: I do not say that an idea is the principle of knowledge because this would mean it is the cause of knowledge as an intelligible species; I say it is the principle of knowledge in the way that the forms of knowable things existing objectively in the knower are said to be the principles of knowledge of those knowable things' (\**In S.T., I, q. 15, art. 1*). Cajetan errs here through over subtlety in his distinction. He fails to see that the form of the intellect is and can only be the *form objectively* existing in the intellect, because the nature of the intellect is to admit no other form than the objective, and precisely through this to come into act (cf. *NE*, 1: 384).

<sup>62</sup> Thus, when he says that the builder cannot have the *exemplar idea* of the house without knowing the parts, he says: 'In the same way the builder could not conceive the species of the house unless he had the proper understanding of each part' (\**S.T., I, q. 15, art. 2*). He also uses *species* for *idea* when speaking of God (*ibid.*, q. 24, art. 5, ad 2 and 3).

<sup>63</sup> 'What is *per se* understood is not the thing whose information is present through understanding etc. The understanding cannot understand unless put



Thomas distinguishes *species* from *idea* he is speaking according to the mode of our imperfect understanding. Indeed, in us there is indeed only one principle with which we understand, and there are many understood things: there is both the principle with which we understand the whole of *ideal being* and also the many things we understand which have many forms in us. They are called ideas or species because they are distinct in us through the real distinction of sense-perceptions to which we refer the idea or the unique species of being. This idea can properly be called *species* when it means the principle with which other things are understood, and called *idea* when considered as object *per se* understood. Hence, when St. Thomas says: 'It is not contrary to the simplicity of the divine intellect that it understands many things, but it would be contrary to its simplicity if the intellect were formed through its many species,'<sup>64</sup> he certainly says something beautiful. We must note, however, that he substitutes *many understood things* for ideas, and *many things understood* by God are not simply many intellectual forms but the things themselves.

1315. When the holy Doctor ceases to use this kind of language tied to words and formulas pre-established by Aristotelianism, he becomes clear, and all equivocation disappears. He does not limit himself simply to saying that God knows everything with his essence as with a unique species or *principium quo* but he equally says that idea in God is only his essence as *principium quod*: 'Hence idea in God is only the essence of God.'<sup>65</sup> In God *species* and *idea* are equally his unique essence *per se* understood. How then does he know *many finite things*? According to St. Thomas God knows *many finite things* through the diverse relationships his one essence has to diverse finite things. And his essence acquires the name of *many ideas* through these diverse relationships. But there cannot be diverse relationships between the divine essence and

into act through this likeness etc.' He speaks about the species *qua intellectus fit actu* [by which the understanding comes into act], which means being, *quod est per se intellectum* [which is *per se* understood], that is, idea. Cf. *De intellectu et intelligibili*.

<sup>64</sup> S.T., I, q. 15, art. 2.

<sup>65</sup> S.T., I, q. 15, art. 1, ad 3.

finite things unless there are finite things that are one extreme of the relationship. But there are no finite things unless God produces them. We have to say therefore that God produces finite things and their relationships to his essence with one and the same act. Hence, in God we cannot divide actual, distinct and full knowledge of finite things from their creation, and therefore the act of knowing them is the same as that of creating them. Thus, St. Thomas says that the world is made by God *per intellectum agentem* [by the acting intellect].<sup>66</sup> Consequently, the *many relationships* of the one divine essence to creatures by which God knows them as if they were ideas are the relationships themselves caused by God *ab aeterno* (as St. Thomas teaches)<sup>67</sup> and constitute the wisdom of which it is written *Ab initio et ante secula creata sum* [Before the ages, in the beginning, he created me].<sup>68</sup> Ideas are therefore produced *ab aeterno* simultaneously with temporary things, and depend on free divine intelligence, as I have said.<sup>69</sup>

1315a. But the word 'relationships', having a double meaning, is ambiguous. St. Thomas says: 'God not only understands many things through his essence but understands that he understands many things through his essence. But this is to understand many natures of things, or that many ideas are in his understanding as understood.'<sup>70</sup> God therefore knows 1. many distinct things, and 2. the *different relationships* that these many known things have with his essence, 'and this is to understand many natures of things, or that many ideas are in his understanding as understood'. These *different relationships* therefore, as natures or *understood ideas*, are posterior to the knowledge he has of distinct things; they are consequent and reflective *ideal relationships* [App., no. 4]. God does not need them in order to know *many distinct things*. He knows many distinct things by

<sup>66</sup> S.T., I, q. 15, art. 1.

<sup>67</sup> 'These relationships, by which ideas are multiplied, are not caused by things but the divine intellect, comparing its essence to things'\* (ibid., art. 2, ad 3).

<sup>68</sup> Sir 24: 14 [9]; Prov 8: 23.

<sup>69</sup> St. Thomas says: 'Absolutely speaking, God does not need to will anything except himself'\* (S.T., I, q. 46, art. 1).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., [q.15, art.2,] ad 2.

many ideas, says St. Thomas, and ideas are many because they are his essence, but his essence acquires the nature of many ideas by *different relationships* (*respectus quibus multiplicantur ideae*). Therefore, the *ideal relationships* resulting from God's knowledge of many things are not the same thing as the relationships which his divine essence has with things and through which he knows many distinct things. These relationships must be prior to his knowledge of things because they constitute that knowledge, but there are no things prior to his knowledge of distinct things. Hence, the divine essence's relationships that constitute the knowledge of things must be those by which things come into existence. But prior to the existence of things and of knowledge of them there is nothing except the *one per se intelligible essence* of God and *divine intellection*. All finite entia are in the *divine per se intelligible essence*, but only virtually and indistinct. The act of divine intellection makes them distinct and thus creates them. With the entia made distinct and created in this way, the *ideal relationships* between the distinct, created things and the divine essence can, by abstraction, be extracted. These relationships are posterior, and are not necessary for the knowledge that God has formed of things with the simple act of his intellection. To speak more accurately, there is nothing ideal in God except that which is present posteriorly or at least simultaneously to the real intellection with which he distinguishes and simultaneously creates finite things. To posit many ideas in God is a human way of speaking: we humans need an idea in order to carry out a task because we do not create either matter or form: the matter is given us from outside, the form also is given us, but given to our intellect as its objective form and at the same time as something other. God on the other hand simultaneously creates both the matter and the finite form with his simple intellection, which is therefore prior to all forms and ideas.

1316. If distinct ideas in the proper sense, not in the attributive sense (only St. Thomas gives them this meaning) are removed from the divine essence, the perfect simplicity of the divine essence is still safeguarded.<sup>71</sup> But if many distinct ideas, as

<sup>71</sup> St. Thomas says most truly that 'it is not contrary to the simplicity of the divine understanding that it understands many things'\* (S. T., I, q. 15, art.

in man, were admitted in God, we would fall into the absurdity of having to admit some distinct, possible entia independent of God. Up to the present, philosophers and theologians have used imperfect language: they have supposed this multiplicity of ideas in God and therefore apply to him what is proper only to the human mind. As a result, some more coherent philosophers found in this a confirmation of the above-mentioned error that possible things are eternal entia independent of God. Recently Fr. Parchetti did precisely this with great boldness in his *Fragmenta Cosmologiae*.<sup>72</sup> Other thinkers, shocked by this most absurd and inevitable consequence, went to the other extreme: instead of carefully explaining possible things and reforming the imprecision of language applied to God, they totally denied them, as did that rare and pious master, Fr. Ercolano Oberrauch, in his *Teologia morale*.

Strictly speaking therefore, there are not multiple ideas in

2). But the *many distinct understood things* have to be outside God so as not to prejudice the divine simplicity, otherwise if there were *many understood things* in the divine nature, there would be multiplicity in that nature. Although St. Thomas says that 'relationships multiplying ideas are not in created things but in God',\* he adds 'but they are not real relationships, like those by which the persons are distinguished; they are relationships understood by God.\*' We must also keep in mind that multiplicity is something outside God, and God alone understands it, because *knowledge* of many things is not itself *many things* when these are exterior. The sole thing therefore that remains in God is the act of knowledge, that is, simple divine intellection. The object of this intellection, in so far as the object is multiple, remains exterior, as I will explain.

<sup>72</sup> Lucani, 1844. According to Fr. Parchetti, the common opinion 'that the only possible things are the pure ideas of God is clearly contrary to common sense and language. All human beings divide possible things from existing things; they popularly maintain that before creation God left entia in pure possibility. By creation he gives existence to entia and can reduce what is existing to a primal state'\* (p. 10). He uses similar language to show that in speech all people, including philosophers, always suppose that possible things are true eternal entia independent of God. He does not see that 1. people speak in a human way, 2. such expressions are not strictly true, 3. *distinct possible things* are the ideal relationships logically posterior to the eternal act of creation, 4. *indistinct possible things* are only the intelligibility of the divine essence, 5. the possibility of their distinction is purely the omnipotence of divine intellection which can create distinct finite entia, and finally 6. the *necessity of possible things* comes from the necessity of the divine essence, where they are virtually and eminently contained.

God when these are understood as the intelligible forms of things, that is, there are not multiple *ideal objects*. In fact there are no *ideas* at all. There is only one intelligible object and only one act of intellection which, in producing the understood, understands. Indeed, nothing can be fully understood unless the understanding subject produces it with the act of understanding it.<sup>73</sup>

1317. If, strictly speaking, and speaking only in an analogical way based on what happens in the human mind, we must in fact remove from the divine nature the ideas that apply to it, then the *known element* in the divine mind will be the *intelligible real* itself, and there is nothing in between. However, this real will not be as it is purely *in se*, which is its relative existence, but in so far as the real existing *in se* is in God. I have distinguished the real that we know from the real known by God. The real we know is not intelligible but made so by means of the idea of being. The real known by God is intelligible without the need of an idea or of anything else to make it intelligible, because it is *being*, and being is, through its own essence, the only intelligible thing. Hence, granted that being subsists (it must subsist if it is pure being and therefore being with all its nature of being), it must essentially know itself and hence is not only intelligible to itself but also essentially understood; in other words, it is *per se* object. In the *per se* understood there is necessarily the continuous, finalised intellection which is the act of being *per se* understood. But because being is totally and fully understood, it must as understood, besides being a finalised or understood intellection, subsist *per se*, just as intellection subsists. In so far therefore as it is *per se* understood, it is also finalised, complete intellection and wisdom common to all the three divine subsistences. But in so far as the understood subsists *in se* as understood, it is distinguished as a second person by the

<sup>73</sup> This explains Vico's very acute opinion that 'just as it is a divine truth that God, in knowing, disposes and generates, so it is a human truth that man, in knowing, also composes and makes. Knowledge is therefore cognition of the kind or manner in which a thing can be made. The mind knows the manner because it composes the elements, and with this knowledge can make the thing. God makes it three-dimensional because he comprehends all things; man makes it two-dimensional because he comprehends the exterior of things'\* (*De antiquiss. Italor. sapientia*, c. 1).

intellection which, if it was to be perfect, had to make its own object subsist like itself, generating it as such. The same must be said about the act of love, which, as finalised and loved, constitutes the love and the essential beatitude common to the three divine subsistences. But in so far as this act of love could not be perfect unless the beloved subsisted as beloved, and hence the act of love made it subsist, so the third subsistent person is spirated.

1317a. But let us keep to the act of perfect intellection. Its unlimitedness means that it understands not only infinite being but, through a *virtuality of eminence*, all finite entia comprised in infinite being.<sup>74</sup> We have in fact seen that smaller things exist virtually in a greater object, and the nature of intelligence is such that it can distinguish the smaller things in the greater by means of typical abstraction. But no intelligence could make this distinction with an idea void of reality, as for example the idea of being. This being is a virtual being in which the real is hidden. I therefore call it a *virtuality of maturation*. However when a real object is given to intelligence, it can make the distinction. For example, intelligence can know and imagine a little statue by adding limitations to a large statue, as I have said. This ability is in the intelligence's volitive virtue to produce.<sup>75</sup> In finite ens

<sup>74</sup> Cajetan writes: 'The learned teach that all things are contained indistinctly and sublimely in the divine essence, like effects in eminent causes, but nevertheless they are contained perfectly, as if they were contained distinctly. Because this is undoubtedly true, as the natures of causes show, the divine essence, as an intelligible species, may seem not to present other things directly but through itself as object. The essence relates to other things in the way that the species of cause relates to the effects to which the cause can extend'\* (*In S.T., I, q. 14, art. 5*). It seems that when Cajetan said 'as the natures of causes show', he meant causes lacking intelligence, because intellective causes cannot operate with only an indistinct knowledge of things. We must grant therefore that prior to the free creative act finite entia are indistinct in the divine essence and in a *virtuality of eminence*. After this act, however, they must be known distinctly by God. But this distinction does not affect God, as we have seen and I will explain at greater length. It does however affect finite entia distinct from and created by him, which are the subject of the distinction.

<sup>75</sup> St. Thomas teaches the same. He says: 'Everything pre-exists in God, not only what is common to everything but also what distinguishes one thing from another. Because God contains all perfections in himself, his essence is compared to all the essences of things not in the way that what is common is

therefore, infinite intelligence can know and discern by knowledge all the finite entia it wishes, that is, form their types, as I said. But granted that God forms these actual types, the finite entia already exist *in se*. Finite entia, especially those that are persons, have an existence *in se* proper to them, and without this existence *in se* proper to themselves, they are not finite entia. No *ideal likeness* of a finite ens, no matter what the likeness, is a finite ens; knowledge of one finite ens is not knowledge of another. Because on the one hand a finite ens exists really *in se* through its own nature, and on the other a real likeness does not exist *in se*, a finite ens cannot make known an ens that exists *in se*; it can make known only a possible ens without determining whether this ens exists *in se* or not. Nor can it make known a possible ens unless there is a real ens *in se* in some mode. An ideal likeness, because it is in no way a real ens, involves a relationship with a real ens and is therefore logically posterior to the latter. In fact either our mind stops solely at the likeness or passes from the likeness to thinking the real ens. If it stops at the likeness only, the likeness is not in any way a likeness; it will be some kind of entity, but if thought does not continue on and end at the other represented thing, the mind can never be aware that the entity represents some other thing by means of likeness. (cf. *NE*, 1: *App.*, no. 2). This other thing must therefore be either *in se* or thought prior to its representation. If it is thought prior to the representation, that is, prior to the likeness, it is not the thing's likeness that makes the thing known to me. Hence the ideal likeness is posterior to the thought of the thing thought. I must therefore think it prior to its likeness. But if I think it prior to its likeness, it exists *in se*. In this case, my thought truly terminates in the thing *in se* but could not do this if the thing were

compared to what is proper, or unity to numbers, or the centre to the radii, but in the way that a perfect act is compared to imperfect acts, as a human being is compared, for example, to an animal, or six (which is a perfect number) to the imperfect numbers contained in it. Clearly, imperfect acts can be known through a perfect act, not only in general but with the knowledge proper to each. For example, anyone who knows a human being, knows an animal with the knowledge proper to animal; anyone who knows the quantity six, knows the quantity three with the knowledge proper to three. Hence, because God's essence *in se* has whatever perfection (and much more) is possessed by the essence of any other thing, God *in se* can know all of them with the knowledge proper to them.\*

truly not *in se*. Consequently, the ideal likeness is absolutely posterior to the thing's existence *in se* and to the thought of the thing. Granted the ideal likeness posterior to the thing *in se* and to the thought of it, the likeness alone would still not make me know the thing *in se* because the likeness can never make known the thing existing *in se* but only what is common and universal to the thing *in se* (cf. *NE*, 1: 92–94). We see therefore that no idea or ideal likeness is sufficient to make a finite ens known in its complete nature, because this requires existence *in se*. Hence, we need the *word* of the mind, as I demonstrated in *A New Essay* (cf. *NE*, 2: 531–534, 33, *app.*, no. 31; 3: 1355, 228). But the word of the human mind is one thing, the Word of the divine mind another.

1318. The word of the human mind does not produce finite entia absolutely, but only relatively to the human mind. Producing them for the human mind is a dianological production, in which consists human knowledge of things *in se*. Prior to the word of the human mind therefore, finite entia have an existence *in se*; prior to the divine Word, no finite ens exists: they come into existence *in se* with the divine Word.

The human mind, or better, the intelligent subject, the human being, is one of the finite entia which exists *in se* absolutely speaking. But this subject with its word, in so far as this terminates in the intelligent subject, exists relatively to itself (cf. *NE*, 2: 439–443; *PSY* 1: 61–81). Also with its word it knows other entia in so far as they exist in reality and *in se*. But how does this word come about? We human beings are first given ideal being which can be called an ideal likeness of all things contained and hidden virtually in it. But we cannot make use of this being as a likeness until we are given finite entia. These are given in an obscure, unintelligible feeling, a feeling that constitutes our own subjective nature and is capable of being modified by the action exercised on it by other finite entia. Granted this feeling and its modifications (neither of which is being), we apprehend them in the idea of being. At this point ideal being begins to emerge from its virtuality of maturation and reveals as its content both the fundamental feeling and the particular sensations that modify it. We now pronounce our own feeling as an existing ens, and the actions done in that feeling as proof of other existing entia, which we also pronounce and affirm as existing. These



pronouncements of entia with their own existence and of the existence of other entia are called *words* of the mind. They constitute our knowledge of real entia in so far as these are subsistent *in se*.<sup>76</sup> The word of the human mind is therefore the *feeling* pronounced as an *ens in se*, in the case of our own substantial feeling, or else it is the pronouncement of *other entia in se* argued to from their action exercised on our own feeling as the action which supposes a subject-ens of the action. These pronouncements of intelligent subjects leave the persuasion and knowledge in them that such real entia subsist *in se* as feelings or as agents. Hence intelligent human subjects, prior to all their words, are given separately 1. the act of being without a term, and 2. some finite real things. The human word consists in the conjunction of these two, that is, in *predicating* the act of being of finite real things, and thus forming these things for themselves and knowing them as entia existing *in se*, because 'an ens existing *in se* is a real thing that has the act of being'.

The divine Word, however, is not the same. Neither ideal being nor a finite real feeling precede this Word as something given. The divine Word must be conceived in another way. The following is the logical procedure, adapted to our human mind, for forming in some way such a sublime concept.

1319. We must first conceive the constitution of God-Being and then the creation of finite entia.

To conceive in some way the constitution of God-Being we must move from the concept of Being understood *per se*.

There is therefore *Being understood per se*. This being is complete and infinite, and hence most real, living and subsistent *in se*.

*Being understood per se* means an infinite act of intelligence with which it fully understands itself as a living, subsistent act always complete from all eternity. It does not understand itself through some likeness or idea, which cannot be nor would be sufficient to understand what subsists *in se*; there is only the living, subsistent ens totally intelligible *per se*.<sup>77</sup> This act of

<sup>76</sup> The words that grammarians call 'verbs' and distinguish from 'nouns', effectively express the affirmation through which we know ens in so far as it carries out its own act of existing, as I showed in *Logica*, 321 and footnote.

<sup>77</sup> St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 2.

intelligence therefore can be only a pronouncement of itself, that is, a Word of this intelligence. But if this act terminates in its total self as subsistent and living *in se*, it is a logically necessary consequence that the *understood* is simultaneously *understood* relative to the intelligent subject, and is *subsistent in se as understood*. As purely understood, as purely object in the intelligent, it is the wisdom essential to God because in the intelligent as understanding, knowledge remains as an effect of what it has pronounced. This knowledge is only the intelligent itself in the most finalised act. But in so far as the understood subsists as understood it is a person *in se*, different from the person of the intelligent as intelligent; it is the *personal* Word of God. Thus God is constituted. We can now speak about the third person.

But the intelligent that understands and has fully understood itself, *in se* understood, has all finite entia in a virtuality of eminence, because it has all reality and perfection. Hence, just as it understands itself fully subsistent by pronouncing itself, so it can pronounce all or as many as it wishes of the finite entia that are in it and thus know them perfectly. Knowing them perfectly means knowing them in all their nature, part of which is their real subsistence *in se*. If therefore they are to be known fully according to their proper nature subsistent *in se*, they must be pronounced and affirmed. This pronouncement produces them as understood in the divine understanding, and knowledge of them remains in this understanding as an effect of the pronouncement, that is, the finalisation of the act which does not differ from the act itself. But by means of this these understood things exist also *in se*, otherwise they would not be existent and known things subsistent *in se*. This is the act of creation through which finite entia exist *in se* because they exist in God as perfectly known. So this mode of existing in God as understood, as pronounced by God is what St. Thomas calls the *intelligible being of creatures*, and he calls their subsistence *in se* their *natural being* [App., no. 5].

1320. The act of divine intellection is therefore always the pronouncement of a word whether the intellection pronounces itself as subsistent or pronounces and affirms finite entia contained in itself in a virtuality of eminence. This is the sole mode of perfect knowledge and hence the only mode fitting to God. But the act with which the intellection pronounces itself

subsistent and the act with which it pronounces finite entia are not therefore two acts or two words. God performs it (and has always performed it from eternity) with one pronouncement and one Word. This act of divine pronouncement is the one divine intellection, is God himself, the *intelligere subsistens* [subsistent understanding] of St. Thomas.<sup>78</sup>

The difficult element to conceive in this fact (in the way that is possible for us) is how this understanding is in two divine persons. Nevertheless some concept of the mystery can be formed, if we carefully consider the following:

The *understanding* or *pronouncement*, always carried out from eternity, is subsistent and therefore constitutes a personal, living subject. What is pronounced (the pronouncement in its final accomplishment) is in the personal subject as knowledge, that is, awareness of itself, and this personal awareness is necessary for personhood. But because the pronounced is perfect, it must, even as pronounced, subsist and therefore as such must have its personhood or personal awareness. Personal awareness however is incommunicable because it terminates in itself. Thus, there are two incommunicable, personal awarenesses and hence two really distinct persons; one as pronouncer is the principle of the other, the other as pronounced is term. But all that is in one personal awareness is also in the other, except one is pronouncer and affirmer while the other is pronounced and affirmed. If there is everything in both, there must also be the pronounced because the pronounced is knowledge, is what is known *per se*. The pronounced must therefore have two modes, one that is pronounced as *object* of the knowledge of the pronouncer (the object understood *per se*), and another that is pronounced, not pure object but object as subsistent *in se*, object that as such has personal, subjective existence. The pronounced therefore as object of the pronouncer pertains to the pronouncer as essential term of the act of the pronouncer and pertains to the personal awareness and to the personhood of this awareness; the pronounced constitutes the essential knowledge of God because the pronouncer communicates this knowledge to the other two persons with his own essence. But in so far as the pronounced, besides being object, also exists

<sup>78</sup> S.T., I, q. 54, art. 1.

subjectively and has its own incommunicable, personal awareness, it is another divine person, the subsistent Word. This person is generated by the subsistent which pronounces it. Hence, in the two persons there is perfect, numerical identity of being, and only diversity of modes that define the two persons through the subsistent different awarenesses. Each of these two awarenesses contains exactly what the other contains, except that the personhood of one is not the personhood of the other. However this fact, that one person lacks the personhood of the other, is not a defect or imperfection. Each person has everything *per se* and *in se* and this everything is numerically identical; only the origin is different. The first person gives and has always given everything to the second, and the first person himself is this act of giving.<sup>79</sup> Hence the first person would not be, if he did not give and had not always given everything to the second. Consequently, there is no true priority in the first person, and no posteriority in the second; they are simultaneous and constituted by the very act. The difference therefore arising *purely* from the origin does not mean either perfection or imperfection,<sup>80</sup> greater or lesser, priority or posteriority, but solely the constitution of God one and three. If a priority is given to the Father and a posteriority to the Son, this is purely dialectical language and not according to the truth; it results from the imperfect mode of human thought.

1321. We can now understand why St. Thomas says that the Word of the mind is a *likeness* of the thing understood: 'It arises from the understanding through its action and is truly a likeness of the thing understood.'<sup>81</sup> We must not understand this likeness in the way a portrait resembles a person. This is a kind of posterior likeness which is not a likeness *per se* but becomes such through a common *idea* that is applied by our understanding to the two things and contains that in which the two things are identical (cf. *NE*, 1: 182–187). Nor must we understand that the two things are a likeness in the way that sensations are

<sup>79</sup> 'Relationship in God is his substance'\* (St. Thomas, *De pot.*, q. 8, art. 1, ad 8).

<sup>80</sup> 'In the oppositeness of relationship, neither part implies imperfection'\* (ibid., ad 13).

<sup>81</sup> *De pot.*, q. 8, art. 1.

likenesses with which we know bodies in some way (cf. *NE*, 2: 948–960). These are likenesses in an improper sense; strictly speaking they are only signs and elements from which we argue to form the word of the mind with which we pronounce bodies. This word is the intellective perception of bodies. We also speak of likeness when we compare real, subsistent finite entia with the *ideas* we have of them. Although this is a true likeness in the proper sense (cf. *NE*, 3: 1115–1118, 1180–1189), it is an *imperfect likeness* because an idea never presents to the mind the total thing but only something universal and common that is in things (cf. *NE*, 1: 91–97, 432, *App.* no. 12). Moreover ideas do not include the existence *in se*, the subsistence of the thing (cf. *NE*, 1: [1: *app.* 7; 2: 407]).

The *idea* of a thing therefore is a true but imperfect likeness of the thing. But in what does this likeness consist? I said that the idea makes us know the *essence* (cf. *NE*, 2: 646–647); it is the essence in so far as the essence reveals itself to the understanding. But the essence of a thing is the thing itself. Therefore the idea or essence is the thing in so far as made intelligible to us (cf. *NE*, 3: 1182). Making an essence or an ens intelligible to ourselves is the same as its becoming an *object* to our understanding. But besides being intelligible to our understanding, an ens exists *in se*. We can therefore think it in two modes: either as intelligible, that is, as *object*, or as subsisting *in se* and therefore as *subject*. Thus, the likeness is in the two modes of the same ens: the object is the likeness of the subject: when the subject is like its object it is called true. If the ens is therefore true, we always suppose that in the likeness in its first and proper sense there is the identity of the ens and there are also the two modes, objective and subjective. The relationship between these two modes is called likeness. The first extreme of the relationship, that is, the ens as object, is called exemplar; the other extreme, copy, ectype, realisation. Such is the nature of *likeness* in its proper sense.

But the idea, as I said, does not contain and does not make known the ens as subsistent; it makes known only something common that remains in potency, that is, lacking the final act of being, which is subsistence. It is not therefore the likeness of something subsistent, and hence, although the likeness is certainly a true likeness, it is imperfect because it does not present the whole ens to the understanding.

The whole ens is pronounced by the Word. However before speaking about the Word in God, we must consider the Word of the human mind.

1322. A word always pronounces subjective reality. However, the human mind, because it must reason and operate, sometimes pretends that even that which has nothing truly subjective does in fact have it. Two sorts of words must therefore be distinguished in the human being: the first and true word, and the posterior and dialectical word. Thus, to affirm a predicate of a dialectical subject is a dialectical word; to affirm relationships of pure ideas which do not contain reality, as in the majority of definitions, is to pronounce a dialectical word; negative propositions are of this kind.<sup>82</sup> With these affirmations the mind knows in the manner of a word but does not pronounce a first and true word.

Ignoring therefore the dialectical word, which has only the appearance of a word, we will consider the first and true word of the human being. This is the word when we affirm (either implicitly or explicitly) some subsistent or real ens. We affirm two genera of real entia: *persons-entia* and *impersonal entia*. The first of the persons-entia we affirm (at least implicitly) is ourselves. We affirm other persons in so far as, after some proof of their existence, we take from ourselves their species or idea, with which we know their essence. Hence the word with which we affirm other persons is posterior to the word with which we affirm ourselves. We affirm impersonal entia through the action they exercise on us, and we affirm those that exercise no action on us when we have had some proof of their subsistence or reality; we imagine or think them according to a species drawn from the actions of the entia that have acted on us. The word therefore with which we pronounce and affirm the impersonal or person things of which we have no experience is posterior to the word with which we pronounce the impersonal things we do experience.

<sup>82</sup> 'The intellect forms by its action the definition of a thing, either an affirmative or negative proposition. This concept of the intellect in us is properly called word'\* (St. Thomas, *De pot.*, q. 8, art. 1). The example of definition and negative proposition is taken from the dialectical word. The affirmative proposition, if it affirms what subsists, includes a true and first word of the mind.

The more perfect and prior word of the mind, therefore, is primarily that with which intelligent beings affirm themselves and then later that with which they affirm what acts on their feeling. Although with this second word we certainly pronounce the subsistence of entia different from us, they are such that we know only the power they have to act on our feeling. This activity of theirs that we experience is not the total nature of subjectively subsistent entia. Even though the word is pronounced, the nature of the operating subject remains fully obscure and unknown to us; it is the subject's active power that takes the place of the subject itself. Consequently, I call such entia extrasubjects because we know nothing of the true subject and know only its power to modify us, and even this we induce from the sensation or modification produced in us. This is why I distinguished between the corporeal principle which remains unknown in perception (cf. *NE*, 2: 855–856), and *body*. *Body* is solely the power to act as term of our feeling principle and to modify this term that we dialectically consider a subject ens. This explains why the word we pronounce when we affirm the subsistence of impersonal things is not a perfect likeness these things as subsistent. This lack of likeness arises from the imperfection of the idea, which does not express their nature but only the effect of their action in us. In fact when we say 'word' we do not exclude the idea because the word is 'an affirmation of the proper and *in se* existence, that is, the subsistence of the reality known in the idea'. Hence, if this reality is known imperfectly in the idea, the word also remains imperfect. Let us leave aside as imperfect this kind of word because we are looking for the concept of a perfect word. We will concern ourselves with the word with which the human person pronounces and affirms himself.

1323. The human soul certainly pronounces the most perfect word it can pronounce when it affirms itself. This affirmation is in some way essential to it as person (I will discuss this observation later). It has the most perfect idea of itself because it is essentially feeling (*PSY*, 1: 81–123). Hence, when it pronounces the word with which it affirms itself, it pronounces something it knows, and pronounces it as subsistent. But because this substantial feeling is not being but only has being, which alone is intelligible *per se*, the human soul is not

*per se* understood or understands itself by means of itself and, as St. Augustine says, it is not light to itself. It understands and pronounces itself in being, which reveals itself to it as pure object and therefore as something different from itself-subject. Hence, the question: 'Does the intellective soul always understand itself?' differs from the question: 'Is it intelligible and understood *per se*?' Leaving the first question on one side, I say that the substantial feeling which constitutes the soul-subject is intelligible or understood not *per se* but through and in being which is something different from it (cf. *NE*, 2: 439–442; 980–982).<sup>83</sup> The soul is a simple, feelable principle, with a psychical, universal feelableness, not a particular feelableness (*PSY*, 2: 966–970 and *Schema*, pp. 124–125).<sup>84</sup> We know ourselves therefore in being as sentient, *living principles*, and as such we pronounce ourselves. A sentient, living principle that knows and pronounces itself is a complete subject, and knowing itself as a subject, it knows itself as an ens, without any need to supply the subject dialectically, as is required by the intellective perception of bodies. But at the same time it understands that this subject which is known is not intelligible *per se* in its subsistence. Consequently, something obscure remains also in this word because with the word we know by affirming that a non-intelligible subject subsists. Hence, because the sentient, intellective

<sup>83</sup> Although St. Thomas says that 'powers of knowledge subsistent *per se* know themselves'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 2, ad 1), and the intellective soul must be included among these subsistent powers of knowledge, he maintains that the soul knows itself potentially but not actually (cf. *NE*, 2: *app.* 2) because it requires an intelligible species if it is to understand. 'Hence, we feel something in act, or understand because our understanding or feeling is informed in act through the species of the feelable or the intelligible. Only in this way does feeling or understanding differ from what is feelable or intelligible, because both are in potency'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 2). Note that St. Thomas is here speaking about some determined thing that can be felt or understood.

Relative to the other question, whether the soul is *per se* intelligible, St. Thomas denies this, giving the same reason as I have proposed, that is, that no creature is being, but only has being. Cf. *S.T.*, I, q. 54, arts. 1–3.

<sup>84</sup> St. Thomas saw something infinite in feeling when he wrote: 'To feel involves something infinite because it is related to all feelable things, like sight to all visible things'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 54, art. 2).



subject-principle, considered solely on its own, is not intelligible, this *human word*, which is the most perfect of the words we can pronounce, is not a *likeness* of a subsistent human being. The other words with which we pronounce other things have much less the nature of *likeness*; they have only the likeness of *affirmation*. This explains why in the human being we distinguish deep down two means of knowledge: through an object, idea or likeness, and through affirmation, either a pronouncement or word. What we know by the first means is an ens as object, but without its own subsistence. By the second means, we know the subsistence *in se*, but not the subsistence *in se* as object but purely as subsistence *in se* non-object. The extent of our knowledge given by the idea or likeness is proportionate to the determination of the idea or likeness. Knowledge of ourselves is composed of an idea which presents the subject determined by a given feeling proper to the subject and by an affirmation which pronounces the subsistence of this feeling and its identity with the pronouncer. The perfection of this word therefore derives from the perfection of the idea, that is, from the essence which is contained in the idea and whose subsistence is pronounced. But the element of this knowledge which comes from the word still remains obscure because the word pronounces the subsistence of what is not *in se* intelligible but intelligible only through participation in a foreign light.

1324. But this word, which is the most perfect and most luminous of all the words pronounceable by human beings, does not attain the perfection of the divine Word.<sup>85</sup> In fact, God simultaneously knows and pronounces himself, and affirms himself as intelligible *per se* so that there is no obscurity in this word, but all is light. Indeed, the divine reality and subsistence is intelligible *per se* as reality and as subsistence because, as infinite, it is being itself. Therefore the distinction we make between what we know as object and what we know as subjectively subsistent *in se* is not present in God. But what is divinely known is as much object as it is subsistent *in se*, because the object is subsistent. Consequently, the divine

<sup>85</sup> "The Son is in some way presented in divine things, but defectively through the word of our mind"\* (St. Thomas, in *Ep. ad Coloss.*, Lesson 4).

object is the first, totally perfect *likeness*. But, as we saw, the true and first likeness is the thing in so far as object of a mind. Hence, the divine being pronounced by itself is the first, totally perfect likeness of itself. Thus the subsistent intellection which is God terminates in itself *subsistent* as in a totally perfect *likeness and image* of itself, in other words, as understood *per se*. In so far therefore as this intellection terminates in its subsistent self, and this subsistent ens understood *per se* is considered essential to the intellection, that is, its internal term, a pure object, then the intellection is essential wisdom. And in so far as this subsistent ens understood *per se* is considered and is subsistent *in se* as understood and person, it is distinguished from the intelligent principle of the intellection; as understood, it is the same intelligent ens and the same complete intellection, but in another mode, that is, with the relationship of something understood and aware of being such, living and operating as such. And because this understood ens is originated and not originating, the awareness is uniquely distinct through the relationship of origin.<sup>86</sup>

However because divine understanding has always the nature of something pronounced or word, which is the totally perfect mode of understanding, it follows that all the objects of this word are not pure objects but subsistent objects. Consequently if the divine pronouncement, besides being borne into itself without limitations, is also borne into the finite entia virtually contained in it, these also must subsist. But the subsistence of these finite entia *in se* is not the subsistence of God *in se*, which is essentially infinite. The entia must therefore subsist with their own subsistence. Hence there are entia with a subjective subsistence different *in se* from the subsistence of God and, because they have this subsistence different *in se*

<sup>86</sup> We see here how, in the totally perfect likeness I have described, to be *alike* does not exclude but means to be *equal*, and therefore how the Fathers accepted the two expressions that 'the Son is like the Father and 'the Son is equal to the Father'. The second expression determines which likeness is being discussed. Hence the first was not granted to the Arians because they denied the second. St. Hilary of Constance says: 'For me likeness is holy, so that no occasion is given for union. But I do not grant it to you because afterwards I devoutly confess that same and similar are equal'\* (*L. c. Constantium Imp.*, n. 22. Cf. *L. de Synod.*, n. 72).

from God, they are said to exist outside God; subsistence *in se* is a subsistence outside every other subject, because subjects can never be confused. This therefore is the way creation takes place.

## Article 2

The first and universal efficient cause is an intellect

1325. As a result of what has been said about the power and effectiveness of the divine intellective act, the first and universal cause is solely an intellect, or better still, subsistent *understanding* itself, which is God. This is the teaching of St. Thomas, who draws another excellent consequence, that all things must have an *intelligible existence* in the divine mind: "The being of the first acting cause, that is, God, is his understanding. Hence whatever effects pre-exist in God as in the first cause, must be in his understanding, and everything in it must be according to what is intelligible. Whatever is in another is in the other according to the mode of the other in which it is."<sup>87</sup> Everything is therefore done by the divine understanding, which is essentially volitive, practical, operative and one sole intellection.

The understood, divine essence is at the same time exemplar of all finite entia. But because it contains them only through a virtuality of eminence, free intellection is necessary that can carry out the typification and creation with a single act. This typification does not posit any distinction in the understood divine essence but remains an act of the intelligent ens, and the subject of the distinction are solely the resulting entia existing *in se* through this act. Although I have often explained how this can be, such things are very difficult to understand and express. I will therefore try to make the thing clearer, if possible.

Let us suppose that a perfect man exists and that an intelligence also exists which contemplates him. It is not difficult to understand that as this intelligence contemplates the man, it can,

<sup>87</sup> S.T., I, q. 14, art. 5.

by means of typical abstraction, form concepts of a less perfect man, indeed of many human beings with various imperfections, and concepts of animals lacking intelligence; it can also form concepts of various parts of the man, of imperfect men and of animals lacking intelligence. All these distinct types certainly do not insert their distinctions in the contemplated, existing, perfect man, from whom they were drawn by the action of intelligence; the perfect man is still entire and undamaged; he has received nothing. The whole process was carried out in the intelligent ens that observed him and extracted the types from him.

Nevertheless, everything positive and pertaining to perfection in the types, everything gathered together and united (as it was previously) in the perfect, existent man, from whom the types were extracted, is there, I say, through a virtuality of eminence. In this operation, the intelligence has, by means of its acts, simply added limitations, and these limitations have produced many ideal entia. Clearly therefore, none of these imperfect, ideal entia can be the same subject identical with the perfect man; they are other subjects. Intelligence therefore is a cause which has the power 'to multiply, by means of typical abstraction, ideal subjects, that is, subjects in the form of object'.

In this operation of the intelligence, through which it multiplies ideal subjects, both the perfect man observed by the intelligence and the act of the intelligence itself play a role. On the one hand, the perfect man provides everything the types have of positive perfection, because the mind has extracted all they have from this man; on the other, the act of the intelligence provides the limitations and the resulting distinctions, which is the negative element. But *to limit* is not an object; it is an act of the intelligence, the term of an act. As something negative, limitation simply takes away from the object by limiting it; it does not add some object-part. Hence, when intelligence knows an object that has no limitation at all, and limits it as its own object, the object becomes another object, solely through the union of the limiting, intellectual act with the unlimited object. All this takes place in the intelligence of human beings.

Divine intelligence however is perfect intelligence and cannot therefore halt at ideal types. These do not make known perfect

entia because imperfect or finite entia are not perfect unless they have their own subsistence, and if they are not known in their own subsistence, they are not fully known. Thus, because divine intelligence is totally perfect, and because being and intellection are actual being, only entia subsistent *in se*, not purely ideal types, can be the term of this intellection. This explains creation.

1326. We have therefore the following consequences:

1. The *divine essence as understood per se* contains all the perfections of created things united together in a virtuality of eminence, without any distinction whatever.

2. The *divine essence as understanding*, having within itself the divine essence as understood *per se*, which is a perfect object that subsists also as a personal subject, thinks this object and limits it. This limiting thought is simply an act of the divine intelligence, and strictly speaking is not a new object. It is the first object, the previous object limited by the act of the intelligence; it is the perfect divine essence understood *per se* in relationship with the limiting divine act.

3. Finite entia are this object limited by the divine intelligence. They must now subsist *in se*. If they did not subsist with their own subsistence, the limited object would not be perfectly thought; it would lack the final act, the subjective act. Hence, the limiting action of the divine intelligence united to the intelligence of itself, which is one sole act with the divine intellection, is the creating power.

We have no need therefore to grant many objects in God in order to explain creation. One sole object is sufficient, the divine essence itself, which contains all things through a virtuality of eminence, and with this object there is the act of the intelligence. This act, by freely limiting the object, multiplies finite entia and creates them, and all distinctions and all multiplicity remain in these subsistent-*in-se* entia.

Positing many objects was the error of the Platonists. The mistake arose because they did not accurately distinguish between ideas and the word of the mind. They stopped at the contemplation of ideas and, seeing these as cause of our knowledge of unchangeable, eternal things, concluded that there must be many principles existing *per se* from all eternity, and that things were informed by participation in these

principles. In my opinion, this was not Plato's system but the Platonists' system who badly misunderstood their master. They did not consider the whole system but only a part of it and thus erred in many ways: 1. they supposed matter to be eternal, as something that cannot be given by ideal essences which do not contain it, and 2. they supposed that there is something absolutely unintelligible, because all ideal knowledge leaves reality unknown; hence they denied a perfect intellection, which is God alone. St. Thomas wisely opposes them with these words: 'The Platonists posited ideas, saying that all things are made by their participation in an idea, for example, of a human being or any other species. However, in place of these ideas, we have one thing, that is, the Son, the Word of God.'<sup>88</sup> Again: 'The Platonists are mistaken in this. They said that perfections are in different things and they attributed each perfection to one first principle. In keeping with the order of these perfections they posited the order of principles: they posited the first ens in which all things share as being, and from this principle another principle, that is, a first intellect in which all things share as understanding, and then another principle, life, in which all things share as living. We on the other hand posit nothing in this way: whatever things have as a perfection they have from one principle.'<sup>89</sup> These errors on the part of these philosophers arose from the over-confidence they placed in ideas. They did not see the emptiness which ideas have *in se*, and hence they could not rise to something more perfect. They were content to make substances of abstracts — the more abstract an idea was, the more perfect it was. In this they failed to notice that ideas, when they gained extension, lost comprehension. As a result they were forced to divide subsistent, totally perfect, eternal essence into many principles.

<sup>88</sup> *In Ep. ad Coloss.*, c. 1, lect. 4.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

Article 3

How it can be said, without falling into pantheism, that all finite things are in God

1327. We are now able to understand how it can be truthfully said, , without falling into pantheism, that all things are in God. This system arises from a material way of thinking, which does not see the truth of the theory I have explained.

It is in fact an opinion of Christian tradition that all things are in God. St. Paul said: 'In him we live and move and are,'<sup>90</sup> and in reference to the divine Word: *Omnia in ipso constant* [In him all things hold together].<sup>91</sup>

All things are in God in two modes:

1. They are in the subsistent, *understood divine essence*, that is, in the Word through a virtuality of eminence, and hence without any distinction whatsoever. So we say that they are in God as in an *eminent exemplar-cause*.

2. They are in the subsistent, *understanding divine essence* as a finalisation of its totally simple act, which gives rise to an existence proper to them, and through this relative existence proper to them they are said to be outside God. When we say therefore that they are distinct in God as in an *eminent efficient cause*, we simply mean that their distinction is not in God as if he were the subject of their distinction, but is in the effect which they themselves are, while the cause remains one. This cause, in distinguishing and limiting them, creates them.

These two modes, in which the real entia of the world are said to be in God, are indicated by St. Thomas when he says: 'God is said to make all things in his wisdom because his wisdom is related to created things just as the skill of the builder is related to the completed house. But this form and wisdom is the Word, and hence all things are founded in him as in a kind of exemplar.'<sup>92</sup> Here, God who as maker is considered the efficient cause of the world, is distinguished from his Word, in whom he makes the world and who is therefore considered the exemplar-cause.

<sup>90</sup> Acts 17: 28.

<sup>91</sup> Col 1: 17.

<sup>92</sup> *In Ep. ad Coloss.*, c. 1, lect. 4. [*App.*, no. 6].

1328. The creative act is therefore being itself, perfect ens, which is divine intellection. This perfect ens that is intellection understands itself. In so far as its understood self is finalisation of the intellection, actuality of the understood self, it is called pure object and corresponds to St. Thomas' *species* (or better, *word-species*). This understood self however is not only a pure object or actuating word-species of the intelligent ens, it also subsists *in se* and is the Word. The perfect ens that is intellection understands finite entia with the intellective act, and understands them as the intellective limitation of itself, understood being. These entia, in so far as understood by the perfect ens, pertain to the limiting intellective act as extremities of its actuality, word-species, but, precisely for this reason, subsist *in se*. They are therefore in God as the intellective act intellectually limiting its understood self, and thus creating.

In so far therefore as the intellective act is common to the three persons, the entia are in the divine essence, they are the divine, totally actual essence itself. In so far as the intellective act is in the three persons in a different mode, the finite entia are also in the three persons in a different mode, they are the persons themselves. But, outside God, the finite entia are distinct and subsistent *in se*. What is in God is subsistent finite ens as a real object, and everything that is positive in this real object is in the infinite real object, and everything that is negative (the limitations) pertains to the infinite intellective act as to its cause. This individual union of what is positive and what is negative, of the limiting intellective act and the real object, constitutes finite ens both in itself and in the divine mind.

Finite ens therefore has two forms: as real objective being, it is in God as fully known; as purely real form subsistent *in se*, it is outside God. This state of exteriority is called by the author of the book of Divine names an 'excess', as if an effusion, of essence (οὐσίας ἔκβασις),<sup>93</sup> and by Latin theologians, *emanatio* [an emanation] or *processio creaturarum a Deo* [a procession of creatures from God].<sup>94</sup>

1329. Therefore what is conceived in God as Exemplar is the

<sup>93</sup> *De div. nom.*, c. 5; πρόοδος, *ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I, qq. 44 and 45.



*real, objective being of finite subsistent things.* This *real, objective being of finite subsistent things* is the internal term of the divine intellective act and pertains to this act, common to the three persons and not to the Word as person, and is the creative act. Thus, strictly speaking, the Exemplar pertains to the creative act as its extreme actuality, and hence is the same as the creating cause in its finalised act. It is not an exemplar like that of a human artist, composed of ideas that are empty of action. Although these ideas certainly direct the ability of the artist, they themselves do not operate. The divine Exemplar is the creating act, and on this act the subsistence of the World continuously depends; the Exemplar is this subsistence in act *as known* and therefore in the objective form. If the divine act did not directly terminate in the created subsistences but knew them through many mediate ideas, the divine simplicity could no longer be preserved; there would be many things in God. But because God touches, so to speak, the subsistences with a single act in creating them, the plurality remains in these created things in that they remain limited in various ways and distinct in themselves. In God, however, there is only the limiting and distinguishing, knowing and creating act, an act called Exemplar because it is the intellective cause of all these limitations and distinctions.

For this reason the renowned author of the book of the divine names, whoever it is, says that everything is in God, united in a virtuality of eminence, and that just as the sun by its heat alone produces many different effects, so does God with one single act — although this example is certainly inadequate,<sup>95</sup> it does help our understanding — and therefore the exemplar pre-exists in God, as the effects pre-exist in the sun:

With greater reason we must grant that all exemplar-entia

<sup>95</sup> This likeness (and all likenesses taken from finite entia) is in my opinion inadequate because the sun, as a single thing, produces different effects not through itself but through the diversity of the natures on which it acts. But God, as a single entity, produces different natures which previously did not exist. He produces them because his intellective act which limits infinite being in various ways is being and therefore he makes different entia subsist. The different limits he applies do not harm the simplicity of his act, as I have explained.

(τὰ πάντα τῶν ὄντων παραδείγματα) pre-exist in the cause of the sun and of all things in a single, superessential conjunction (κατὰ μίαν ὑπερούσιον ἔννοσιν), seeing that it produces the essences through a kind of excess (ἐκβασιν) of essence.

He continues, still talking about these exemplars:

I say that in God there are exemplars, substantific concepts of entia and pre-existent things united together (ἐνιαιώς). Theology calls these entia and things predefinitions and divine good wills of entia according to which he who is superessence defined and produced all entia.<sup>96</sup>

We see here that the exemplars, or better, the Exemplar, which can be truly conceived in God, is no different from the intellective, volitive act creating finite entia. This act consists in conceiving, by a pronouncement, being as finite, which the author has described admirably when he calls God 'that which contains and anticipates all the limitations of all things':<sup>97</sup>

1330. The difficulty we humans have in understanding this mysterious fact of creation is the following. God is the cause of all finite entia. These, created distinct by him through an intellective act, are distinctly known by him. As known, they posit no distinction or plurality of any sort in him; all the distinction and plurality remain in the effect, that is, in the finite entia subsistent *in se*. If we apply human thinking to God, we will be incapable of any understanding. Transferring to God what we see in human operation is precisely what led the Platonists astray, as indeed St. Thomas excellently notes. They were unable to rise to the concept of a thinking that is totally different from ours, which is what divine thinking is and was revealed to us only by Christianity. Hence, they thought that a true distinction and plurality were necessary also in the divine exemplar, as required by the exemplar that the human artist uses to produce different things. The human exemplar necessarily consists of ideas drawn from finite entia, which are many and distinct. In the case of God, however, he understands by simply pronouncing things, which thereby become subsistent *in se*, a

<sup>96</sup> *De div. nom.*, c. 5

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

pronouncement which is a most simple act.<sup>98</sup> Hence, St. Maximus observes that the author of the divine names certainly retained the words 'ideas' and 'exemplars' (to which Plato gave a meagre meaning, unworthy of God) and explained them respectfully: he gave them a more sublime sense, defining idea or exemplar as 'the eternal production, perfect in itself, of the eternal God'.<sup>99</sup>

When we are speaking about God therefore, and wish to keep the word 'exemplar' taken from what happens in the human craftsman, we must change its meaning. The best definition is that of St. Maximus, who takes as a lead the author of the book of divine names: 'Exemplar is what God makes as something pronounced by the divine intellect and thus having the form of a real object.' The word 'idea' can certainly be retained if we reserve it, as I do, to indicate the object of human intuition, not the real object but the pure term of the human intellect. In this way we go back to saying that created entia subsistent *in se* are absolutely (not relatively to themselves) the direct term of the creative act that is verbiform intellective. But as term of this intellection, they pertain to the intellection as object-subjects. and in so far as subsistent *in se*, they have a purely subjective existence relative to themselves and hence outside the object. Subsistent subjects exist therefore in two modes: 1. enclosed within the divine object and 2. relative to themselves, which means that relative to themselves they are divided from the divine object, they are outside it. As objects-subjects, they can be called totally perfect *likenesses* of the pure subjects and, although they pertain to divine intellection as an extreme of its actuality, they posit no distinction at all in God, because the distinction is in the pure subjects. It is excluded from the unity of

<sup>98</sup> 'The Platonists maintained that God is the cause of all being, because they thought he could not be the cause of many things in what was proper to them and made them different from each other, but only in what was common to them all. Consequently, they posited certain second causes which determine things according to their natures and receive being in common from God. They called these causes exemplars of things, just as they called exemplar of a human being an individual who could be the cause of humanity in all individual human beings, and the same about other things' (In *De Div. nomin.* c. 5).

<sup>99</sup> St. Max., *Sch. in L. De Div. nom.*, c. 5.

the divine object that contains the pure subjects in a totally simple mode, and is produced by the divine intellection as a limiting, pronouncing cause. This cause limits and pronounces the real subjects existing *in se*. The pronouncement remains unique, and the distinction remains totally in the effect, which the pure subjects existing *in se* are, as things different from God.

1331. That a subsistent real thing can simultaneously be the term of an intellect is clear if we consider what happens in ourselves. We can have no doubt about this, and I have explained the fact elsewhere (*Lezioni filosofiche*, 31 ss.). When our intellect pronounces and affirms subsistent real things, it has these subsistent real things as its term. It has no image or indication or sign of them, but has them identical to what they are in themselves but with another mode of being. It pronounces and affirms them in its own object, which is being (cf. *NE*, 1: 55–57, 337, 339, 358; 2: 495, 506, 510, 518, 964; 3: 1202). However, relative to themselves they are outside the object, existing as pure subjects. We must remember how what is pronounced by us differs from what is pronounced by God. The thing we pronounce or the word is a finite, subsistent real pronounced by us in the ideal object. This subsistent real we pronounce in the ideal object is double because it is either 1. ourselves or 2. something different from ourselves. When we pronounce ourselves or our own feeling (I prescind from what we pronounce in the order of reflection, to which the dialectical word pertains) and when we consider only the direct pronouncement of ourselves or of our feeling, we carry out an intellective operation that terminates concretely in the *subsistent real*. To this real pertains the *fundamental perception* that unites the animate body with the intellective principle, which thus becomes rational (*PSY*, 1: 254–266). When we pronounce a subsistent ens different from ourselves we perform an operation which terminates in the *subsistent ens* in an abstract mode. The reason why the manner of this pronouncement is abstract is that subsistent entia different from ourselves are not pronounced subsistent unless we either 1. experience their action on us, as in the intellective perception of external bodies, or 2. argue to their existence by means of logical relationships. In the first case, the thing to which we directly apply our attention is the *feelable actions* of entia, and we argue from these actions to the subsistence of the

entia and to the mode of their existence. In the second case, we argue to their subsistence from the logical relationships that make their subsistence necessary for us. From this, and making use of the abstract idea of subsistence as a universal predicate, we conclude their subsistence. We therefore predicate subsistence in an abstract mode, but this *word through abstraction* must be distinguished from both a *word through concretion* and a *dialectical word*, with which, for the ease of reasoning, we affirm to be subsistent what is not subsistent.

Hence the only *word through concretion* we have is the one whose direct term is ourselves or our feeling. All other words, which are not dialectical, are *words through abstraction*. The difference between these two kinds of words is very clear. The word through abstraction, which pronounces the subsistence in so far as we know it abstractly, cannot act in a real way on what is subsistent. The subsistent is given to our mind only as pure subsistent, when what is subsistent is taken as an abstract but not in its own reality — we have not been moved to pronounce its subsistence by it as really present to us by its action or by a logical relationship. This explains why our thought that concerns subsistent real entia different from us, does not produce any modification at all in them; for example, when I think of the cathedral at Milan, the building is in no way affected or changed by my thought. My thought, affirming and internally thinking about this real ens, uses images, representations, memories and abstract ideas of the cathedral but not the cathedral itself. And among these abstract ideas is that of the subsistence which is the term of the word I pronounce.

This is not the case of the word we pronounce through concretion, which is the word of ourselves or of our feeling. On the contrary, this word, strictly speaking, constitutes *myself* (*PSY*, 1: 61–68). Hence, it is the principle of all the energy we exert on our feeling and body, from which follows the union between body and soul (*PSY*, 1: 284 [274]–285). It is also all the influence exercised by the rational principle on the animal feeling, as I have described at length in *Psychology* (*PSY*, 1: 291–300; 2: 1745–1753).

1332. We see from this that the intellective *word* is naturally active relative to the pronounced reality. It is not like an *idea* that only makes known real entia contained in the object but

not real entia as pure subsistent subjects outside the object, nor does an idea act on them. But the intellective word cannot produce this real action unless it is a perfect word, the kind I call *concrete* (συμφύη), that is, made *through concretion*. For this reason I said that among all the words we pronounce, the word with which we naturally and directly pronounce our own feeling is the only one which in some way resembles the divine, and is indeed still far from perfectly representing it. Let us analyse this human word so that we can know its imperfections.

The condition that makes a word concrete and hence active in its term is this: 'What the intellect pronounces and affirms must be so joined to the pronouncing and affirming intellect (the intellect emitting the word) that it forms one and the same ens with this intellect.'

This applies totally to God, not only when he pronounces himself and thus generates what is called the divine Word, but when he pronounces finite entia and thus creates them. God is the ens that is purely and solely being, and being is of its nature both subject and object, therefore the pronounced object is always essentially himself. Consequently all pronounced finite entia, in so far as pronounced and therefore *objects* of the pronouncement, are God, the pronouncing subject; as internal terminations of his subjective act, they are his terminating act. Thus, in the book of the divine names, we read that 'all entia recur in him through a unification superior to all unifications.'<sup>100</sup> These entia, which are in God as term of his intellective act, relative to him and, in the case of the persons, relative to their awarenesses, exist *in se* as pure subjects, not as objects, because the objectivity that is the mode they have in God, does not form part of their awareness; it is the termination of the substantive act of God, as I said.

But if this is the case in God because he is being, and being is both subject and object, it is not our case. We are not being but purely a *real*. The only form therefore we can subjectively have is the subjective, which is precisely the real form. Consequently, the objective term of the human word cannot be something pertaining to the nature of the pronouncer or of his pronouncement. It has to be another nature, on which the human word

<sup>100</sup> C. 5.

cannot exercise any action because this other nature does not form one and the same ens with the pronouncing intellect, which is the condition I have posited. Indeed, even when we, with that direct, natural affirmation which constitutes fundamental perception, pronounce and affirm our own feeling, we pronounce it in being as in the containing object. Hence, the action of this pronouncement or word is certainly carried out in the pronounced feeling but not in the object in which it is pronounced; this remains totally immune from human action. Objective being, received by us, aids our theoretical knowledge but cannot be a term of human action. The difference between pure, that is, theoretical knowledge<sup>101</sup> and action is that pure knowledge is *received*, and reception is the opposite concept of action (cf. *Logica*, 428, 437). Hence the *human word*, in its action, is defective and through this deficiency is incapable of giving *being* to what it has pronounced, because being does not form one and the same ens with the pronouncing intellect. The human word is only capable of giving a *modification* to the real that it pronounces in objective being, which is our own feeling. On the contrary, God, as one and the same with being, pronounces not only the real in being but real being and therefore operates in all his term as his own, making this term object, that is, objective being, which is a mode of absolute being. However, what is contained in this real being is the finite real, which existing relative to itself and only to itself is outside the divine object.

1333. I have shown that the intellect is naturally a truly efficient and active cause when it acts like a word, and the fact that

<sup>101</sup> Θεωρέω, *I look, I contemplate*, in the sense of sight. And reasonably so, because knowledge in some way resembles sense in that sense *experiences*, while intellect *receives*. *To experience* and to *receive* are often taken as the same thing, even by Aristotle; the sensists also took advantage of this confusion of the two concepts. They said that sight is a sense which seems not only to experience but also to receive the *sensible image*, but they were unaware that the sensations of sight have only a greater aptitude than those of the other senses to be used as signs by the intellect and hence acquire the concept of *species*. For the same reason, what the Latins called *visum*, the Greeks called εἶδος, ἰδέεα, and all human knowledge was reduced to some first sights. St. Thomas says: 'All knowledge is had through some principles known *per se* and therefore *seen*. Hence, everything known must in some way be seen'\* (S. T., II-II, q. 1, art. 5; cf. in *III D.*, q. 2, art. 2, q. 3; C. C., 3: 154; *De verit.*, 2: 1).

it makes things only known but does not act on them pertains to its imperfection. I repeat, however, that when its act terminates in many things or in things with a nature different from its own, it does not necessarily participate in their multiplicity or their nature.

We can acknowledge, or at least begin to acknowledge, the factual truth of this statement by considering what happens in human understanding. When we think a real body, for example, a stone, we perceive and affirm it. No one, except some irrational materialists, has ever thought that the intellect thus acquired the qualities of the stone, that it became a material body, with a particular extension and solidity or suchlike. Aristotle turned to *images*; according to him the stone is known through the *image* of the stone.<sup>102</sup> But granted that the knowable essence of the stone is known through the stone's *image*, this does not explain how the *subsistence* is known. The subsistence is certainly not given solely in the *image*; a word is required, that is, an intellectual affirmation. In us, a word reduces to a simple act of assent, as I have explained elsewhere. This act is totally subjective; it is the subject's act that extends to another real ens which it touches, as we might say, without being confused with it. If therefore with this word we affirm the really existing stone and not simply its image, why is it that we, who have the stone as the term of our action, do not take its qualities? The answer is because we affirm the nature of the stone as existing in the object or ideal being in which we see it, after real sensation has made it present to us. This proves that when the stone is in the object, it has another mode of being, different from that which it has *in se* and that the intellect, in order to know and affirm it, does not need to take the qualities of the stone subsistent *in se*; it

<sup>102</sup> Following Aristotle, St. Thomas says: 'The eye does not know the stone according to the being the stone has in the eye. But by means of the stone's image which the eye has in itself, the eye knows the stone according to the being the stone has outside the eye'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 6). Strictly speaking of course, it is not the eye but the cognitive faculty that knows the stone. In human beings, the eye serves the cognitive faculty by supplying it with the effect produced by the stone in the feeling. In the animal, sensation in the eye produces instinct which appears to act according to knowledge of the stone, but acts in an ordered way through an order of sensations and instincts pre-established by nature, as I have explained in *Anthropology* (416 ss.).



can do all this without any loss of qualities by the stone or its act. This nature of the word is certainly mysterious, but mysterious only due to our habit of wanting all actions to resemble those we see externally in bodies. We take these actions as an example of all others and think we know them, whereas in fact we know them less than other spiritual actions.

The nature of the word with which we know subsistent things must therefore be considered *in se*, examining our own consciousness and not looking for an explanation in examples outside ourselves.

1334. According to me, therefore, the word is an act of the spirit. Hence, it can have only the nature of the spirit, which is simple and one. It must therefore maintain its property that it is spiritual, one and simple, whatever thing it pronounces, and this thing cannot make it change its nature, although the thing is the term of the word's act. This term of the word's act can therefore exist *in se* and, as existing *in se*, will be different from another term pronounced by the word and of which the word is the act. However, in so far as it is a precise internal term of such an act and, as it were, the act's extreme end, it does not separate itself from the act but is, so to speak, the most actual act itself. Hence it is of the same nature as the subject that pronounces the word. We should keep in mind the following universal, ontological principle which is valid not only in active but in passive acts: 'Whenever an acting or experiencing subject keeps its identity, then its action and experience are of the same nature as the subject precisely because it is the experiencing or acting subject.' All philosophers acknowledged this principle. Some exaggerated it, as Aristotle did when he said: 'Whatever is received is received according to the likeness of the receiver.'<sup>\*</sup> This should be limited by the condition I have just mentioned, namely, 'whenever the acting or experiencing subject keeps its identity', which results from the theory of identity I explained earlier. Furthermore, *passivity* is not well expressed by the concept of *receiving*, which is a very different concept (cf. *Logica*, 437-439).

The word is therefore an act of the intellect, and its term, whatever it is *in se*, is still, as a pure term, an actuality of the word. This act with its actuality that terminates the act retains the nature of the intellect, a nature simple and one which is the

principle producing the act. This term, as existing *in se* and thus as something else, can have a different nature (for example, it can be corporeal and extended) without transferring its properties to the word. The term in itself can also be multiple without the multiplicity pertaining to the term as actual and proper to the word. This explains why in every action philosophers distinguished between the action's term or internal end and its term or external end, but they did not find the ontological reason (which I am explaining here) for this universally seen and accepted distinction.

We may be surprised at the fact that the intellect knows and affirms other things different from itself whose properties are the opposite of those of its own nature, and yet does not share in them. We may be surprised that the intellect has all these things in itself, as its own term, and yet the term retains the one simple nature of the intellect, even though the term, in its existence *in se*, is extended and multiple. But our surprise will be reduced if we consider not only abstractly but in its application the universal, ontological principle mentioned above: 'Whenever an acting or experiencing subject keeps its identity, then its action and passivity (in both the part where these begin and the part where they terminate) retain the subject's nature and essential properties'. This law can be applied to all principle-entia, which alone can be considered as real subjects — a subject is 'what is first in an ens, container and cause of unity', and if what is first is present, there is a principle.<sup>103</sup> Real subjects (whether imperfect or not) are sensitive and intellective. In the case of sensitive subjects or principles, the same takes place in them as in intellective principles. Sensitive subjects, as simple and one, receive an extended, multiple term without losing their unicity and simplicity. In so far as the term is in them and not considered as existing *in se*, it takes on their one and simple nature. This is so true that the unity and simplicity of the principle are in fact the origin of what is extended and multiple in such a way that the extended and multiple has its own properties of extension and multiplicity solely from

<sup>103</sup> 'It is a common property therefore of all "beginnings" to be the first thing from which something either exists or comes into being or becomes known'\* (*Metaph.*, 4 (5): 1.

the one and simple principle that contains it and thus becomes its cause (AMS, 94–103).

1335. We must therefore say that everything that is *in se* extended or multiple exists in the feeling principle and in the intellective principle in a mode that is unextended and one. In the case of the intellective principle this unextended mode is called either ‘species’, which means there is only essence, or ‘word’, which means there is subsistence, or ‘word-species’ through the unification of the two internal terms. This is how the following proposition of St. Thomas must be understood and explained: ‘Things that know are distinguished from things that do not know’<sup>104</sup> in this way: things that do not know have only their form, but the thing that knows naturally has also the form of something else, because the species of what is known is in the knower.’<sup>105</sup>

The principle and intellective cause therefore has this extraordinary nature: with its act it itself becomes object, and if we suppose that this act is already finalised, the principle and intellective cause is itself object. But we human beings, through our internal experience, know only our intellective principle, which, because it is not perfect, is not in all the act it can have; much of the act remains in potency. We distinguish therefore the intellect in potency from the intellect in act. This distinction led Aristotle to say with great discernment that in us ‘there is an intellect that becomes all things, and an intellect that does all things’\*.<sup>106</sup> This second intellect is the objective form of the human subject through which the subject has visual or intuitive power; this power, in my opinion, is ideal being. The first intellect becomes all things when it understands them (and when it already understands them it was called *intellectus adeptus* [adept intellect]). Note however, in order to express the individual union of things understood by the intellect that understands them, Aristotle found no more appropriate way than saying that the intellect became things. This statement, accepted by the

<sup>104</sup> Using the language of Aristotle, St. Thomas includes here among the things that know things that feel. What he says therefore is valid for all those things I call real subjects or principle-entia.

<sup>105</sup> S. T., I, q. 14, art. 1.

<sup>106</sup> *De Anima*, 3: 5.

Scholastics, harmonises with Aristotle's other statement: 'The intellect in act is the same as the understood in act.'<sup>107</sup>

1335a. We cannot deny that this opinion is a proof of Aristotle's great mind, but he considered the intellect in its perfection rather than the human intellect. He did not sufficiently see the infinite difference between the intellect considered *in se*, in its ideal, in its perfection, and the imperfect intellect, which [is] more a participation in intellect than intellect itself;<sup>108</sup> or if he did see this, he did not sufficiently analyse the difference. If he had done so, he would have seen that in the human being the intellect never becomes with its act the understood object, which is always ideal being and therefore always something other, something different from the human intellective act. The human intellect only acquires the actuality called *knowledge*, and knowledge is an effect of the intimate, indivisible union between the human subjective principle and what is other, that is, being, which can never be confused with the principle.

The opinion that the *species* is an actuality of the human intellect (Aristotle's opinion), arose from two previous, contrary errors of his: 1. he conceived the intellect in its perfection and, as I said, applied this concept to the human intellect (to which it does not pertain) and thus too greatly elevated this intellect; 2. he conceived sense as an intellective faculty and thus debased the human intellect, that is, he considered it more like corporeal feeling than it truly is. We could perhaps say in the case of sense alone that the sensible species is the actuality of the feeling act.

<sup>107</sup> *De Anima*, 3: A.

<sup>108</sup> For this reason the human being was called *rationis particeps* [partaker of reason]. Vico sees much wisdom in this way of speaking by the Latin authors: 'They popularly described the human being as an animating *partaker* of reason, but not in any way having *full possession* of it,' and adds: 'Hence *thought* is proper to the human mind, but *understanding* to the divine mind. God reads all the elements of things, both internal and external, because he contains and disposes. The human mind, however, because terminated and outside all other things which are not it, is restricted to only the extremes of things; it never apprehends everything. It can *think* about things but not *understand*. Hence it is a *partaker* of reason, not a *full possessor*'\* (*De Antiquiss. Ital. Sap.*, c. 1). Cicero says that the human spirit is not only a *rationis particeps* [partaker of reason] but also *compos* [a full possessor] (*De Amic.*, c. 8). We see therefore that the word *compos* does not have all the force that Vico seems to find in it.

But even this can be said only in a certain way a) because the word 'species' applied to sense, if only to sight, is a name given later, after the understanding has used sensation as a sign of an ens, as I have said, and b) because there is also something other in sensation in so far as it is sense-perception, that is, the energy of an extrasubjective agent. Consequently there is not total actuality of the feeling agent; there is also passivity, reception of another's action.

1336. To return to the object of human understanding, it is something other, and the understanding intuites it as something other, because by its essence it is intuitable or knowable. But in this intuition of something other, the other is certainly not the intuitive act itself; if it were, it would be the effect of the intuitive act. Simply stated, the one who is intuiting receives in himself the effect of this intuitive union, and this effect is not the object, but knowledge of the object as something other.

What the human intellect sees and knows in its object, that is, in being, is primarily real feelings. It sees these as determinations of the object, as real acts of virtual being, which is the object, in such a way that virtual being is the *determinable*, as I have said. When the determinable acquires sensible determinations, it becomes all things. This explains the dialectical unity of all entia in being, which I discussed in the previous book. Thus, that which becomes everything is not the subjective understanding, νοῦς, but the understood object. This understood object which becomes everything also posits in act, with its presence, the subjective understanding. Hence it itself is neither human *understanding* that *experiences* nor human *understanding* that *acts*; instead, with its presence it is the cause of the subjective human understanding. In this mode the human understanding is always experiencing, that is, receptive, and all its activity originates from this reception. The object, as still empty, that is, as virtual being, present to the subjective principle, draws this principle to its first intellectual act and produces the first intuition in it, an intuition which is universal because its object is universal being. And if we accept that this first intuition becomes all other less universal intuitions, we will have the concept of a potency to understand, that is, of a *possible* or *virtual* subjective understanding, an understanding however that will always be an effect of the presence of virtual being.

When therefore this virtual being becomes this or that thing by receiving feelable determinations, the subjective understanding itself receives different effects, that is, has different intuitions within the first universal intuition and, having thus intuitive power and made intellective, it contributes something of its own. This subsequent and totally subjective activity, whose prior condition is the reception of objects, manifests itself in reasoning (cf. *Logica*, 8, 68, 749). Reasoning therefore could be called acting or active, subjective understanding. It does not however bestow any new matter of knowledge but simply works on received matter by using abstraction, analysis and synthesis.

Aristotle glimpsed the necessity of the object and some of its qualities but he confused it with the subjective understanding. In fact, when he makes his active intellect resemble light, οἷον τὸ φῶς, he says something that fits the object, but as likeness taken from the sensation of sight, it is not without ambiguity. Light can be taken as a luminous sensation, in which case it is still something subjective; it can also be taken as the acting cause that produces the sensation, and in this case it resembles the object. Although the action of something other, for example, luminous matter, enters into the feeling subject so that the matter is felt (an individual conjunction of action and experience), they cannot be confused because action pertains to a subject, experience to something other. What is said about *action* relative to light must be said equally about *presence* relative to object-being. Object-being supposes another subject that is different from the human being who receives object-being and has it present.

The ambiguity is still greater when Aristotle makes his active intellect resemble a habit, ὥς ἐξῆς τις. If habit meant *something possessed*, the qualification would adapt well to being, because we can say that being is abidingly *possessed* by the human subjective principle, but if a habit itself or subjective quality is understood, the qualification no longer adapts well.

1337. We must accept therefore that human understanding intuitively feels in being, as determinations of ideal being. This manner of the presence of feelings, that is, finite realities, before the mind, is called their *absolute existence*, that is, the *metaphysical world*. Knowing them in this way (which is our

first cognition, the foundation of all other ways of knowing) is a faint gleam of the existence that finite entia have in God. It is not a perfect knowledge but, as I say, a faint gleam of knowledge. We thus see finite entia in ideal being, in the way that we feel them; and in so far as we feel them they are relative. We see therefore in an absolute mode relative entia which in so far as in us are relative. But in God relative entia are not in him in so far as they are relative; they are in his creative act, as in their absolute cause as relative entia. We human beings know relative existence in an absolute mode, whereas God knows the absolute existence of relative existence in an absolute mode. Because in the present life we do not perceive the absolute existence of relative existence, our knowledge is defective, and although we certainly see feelings in being, which is the absolute mode of knowledge, we do not see their absolute existence in God. Only this absolute existence is capable of explaining how they are truly in being, and it is the knot binding them to being, precisely in the way that their relative existence follows necessarily from their absolute existence, their direct cause. We can see this from the following: as long as we intuit them simply in being, we do not yet truly know if they *in fact exist in se* but only that they *can exist in se*. And seen by us in being, they are called *essences*, not *subsistences*. Nevertheless, their essences are relative to their subsistences because we do not see the essences in being unless, in the last analysis, we have *felt* them subsistent. Hence we have done no more than see in being what, in objective being, corresponds to these subjective subsistences; we have therefore transported our feelings into being. But these real feelings pertain to the mode of relative existence, whereas being itself pertains to the mode of absolute existence. Hence, in our intuition of species, we join together the *relative* and the *absolute*, making one sole thing of them, that is, one species. But the relative and the absolute are heterogeneous and cannot be joined, making the relative a part of the absolute. Therefore it is impossible for us to see their subjective conjunction, which is the obscure part of human knowledge. All we can say is that the *relative*, which is subjective, remains, in so far as subjective, really divided from being that is absolute. This is the reason why animal feeling on its own remains obscure, and considered on its own lacks

intelligibility. We have here therefore the basic explanation of the falsehood of *sensism*; it is the final and ontological refutation of that crude system that has such a hold on the human mind, and served as the crumbling foundation of those German abstractions with which pantheism was constructed, together with all the other monstrous errors.

1338. There is nothing therefore intelligible in relative existences, that is, in feelings. Consequently we vest feelings with the objective form that is absolute, but cannot change them by this action. We thus possess objectivised, relative existences, that is, existences vested with an absolute form. But because these existences cannot import their relative nature, which is subsistent reality, into this form, it remains external, excluded from the form; only their *possibility* remains in the absolute form. This is an element of their absolute existence and pertains to their *cause*. Hence, we see relative existences in their cause, however not totally in the cause but only in the cause as intelligible, not as an intelligent, creating subject. Thinking the possibility (intelligible cause) of finite subsistent things, that is, relative things, means thinking also the relative subsistence, but always as possible, and hence according to absolute existence, not according to their relative existence; it is not a judgment that they really exist. But because the possible relative subsistence or existence that is thought in being is determined, the real feeling is also thought that determines it as possible because the real feeling is simply the determined subsistence. When the real feeling is thought in this way in its possibility or essence, which is all we see of the absolute existence, the real feeling we experience acquires the nature of relative subsistence, a representative sign of an absolute reality.

1338a The mind therefore, taking the feelings as simple representative signs of an ens, has by that fact stripped them of their own subsistence. It leaves this subsistence behind in feeling and moves forward to find the ens, which is absolute existence. But all it knows about the ens is that it is represented by the relative existences which it possesses in the feeling and which in the idea have acquired the nature of sign. Ens, that is, the absolute of relative things, is known through a simple relationship with these and is not perceived in itself. Standing



before our mind, it becomes composed of ideal being, that is, of reasons and logical relationships. I have already said concerning this that human knowledge of real things necessarily consists in a relationship (cf. *NE*, 1: 358–359). The relative real can be vested by our mind with an objective, absolute form because relative existence necessarily results from an absolute existence. This absolute existence is the link which joins the absolute form with the relative existence. Although we do not see the absolute existence and therefore do not see this link or bond between the relative existence (feeling) and the objective, absolute form, that is, being, nevertheless we experience the logical necessity of it and suppose it to be an *x*, a mediator between the relative existence or feeling and being. In fact, knowing that the relative existence can be contained in the objective absolute form is not the same as knowing how it can be contained. However, that it can be contained is sufficient for us to see it in the objective absolute form, or rather to vest it with this form. But when, with a further reflection, we ask ourselves how this can be, and what connection binds the relative existence with the absolute form, we cannot answer directly by saying we see the connection; we have to be content that the fact is so, and must be so, even if the manner of it remains obscure. The feeling itself therefore subsists *in se*, and this existence is its relative existence; it also exists in being with an absolute existence. But although it exists in being, nevertheless as absolute existence it is seen imperfectly, for the reason that it is seen in being only as intelligible or possible; we do not see it as actually existing to itself. If we could see it fully in its absolute existence, then the thing that determines it, that is, the relative feeling seen as possible, would change in nature, would become totally something else; it would become not a purely intelligible cause but an intelligent, creating cause, a creative act. This act would make known both the possibility and subsistence of finite entia relative to ourselves, and in us subjectively there would be nothing of their multiplicity and of their limited, relative properties. We would see *how* finite entia are in God, through an eminent virtuality: we would see God, the cause of all things.

1339. Because so much is not granted to the human mind, the only thing it can see in the absolute form, in being, are

feelings as possible. This possibility, which is an element of the absolute existence of such feelings, is called *essence*, and their relative, proper existence remains in feeling. If therefore we do not know this relative, proper existence in the idea, clearly we will either never know it at all or must come to know it by another act, different from that of the pure intuition of ideas. But we do know in some way even the relative, proper existence of feelings; otherwise we could not say anything about them. The act with which we know them is in fact the word, which in us is totally distinct from the intuitive act of the idea. What then is this human word?

It is simply an assent, an affirmation, an adhesion of the intelligent subject, something so very simple that we pronounce it and with it acquire the persuasion that what we see absolutely in the idea subsists *in se* relatively (*Lezioni*, 33 ss.).

Hence what the human subject gives assent to is something different from the act of the assent itself. That to which we give our assent with an affirmation or judgment is fully given us beforehand in the idea, in the ideal vision. The assent itself is a pure act of the spirit which, when affirming, pronounces that the act exists relatively to itself. This persuasion is a spiritual effect that remains in the intelligent subject after his act of affirmation, and this act remains habitually and never ceases. An actual act and an habitual act are simply a modification of the human intelligent subject (*Lezioni*, 34). This modification however perfects the intelligent subject because the modification is a new subjective actuality acquired by the subject, and the actuality is a perfection.

The human word therefore is an actuality and a perfection of the human spirit, but an actuality that terminates in something previous to it. This other thing is intelligible being together with everything in it. The human subject is certainly not this being; being is another nature and of another categorical form, which is an even greater difference because it is an objective not a subjective form.

1340. Granted therefore that the human word, whether considered an affirmation or habitually permanent as a persuasion, is simply an actuality of the intelligent subject, we can form some concept of what the Word must be in God. This Word or pronouncement of God will have the conditions of a word, that

is, it will be simply an act of God, an act always complete, but not an act which is done and after being done, partly ceases, as happens in us.

Moreover, this Word or divine pronouncement will differ from the human word primarily in that the human word needs to have, prior to itself, an object which is not the word but something other. Whereas God is being itself, and being is necessarily in the objective form. Consequently God, who pronounces the Word, will, with his act terminating in objective Being, terminate in himself, in his own essence, not in another nature. Thus, God who is subsistent Being pronounces himself who is subsistent Being. As pronouncer, he is subsistent, pronouncing Being; as pronounced, he is subsistent, pronounced Being, and this is the divine Word. But in pronouncing himself totally, affirming his total self, he also pronounces himself partially, with the same act. Pronouncing himself partially, he pronounces the absolute existence of relative entia; pronouncing himself totally, he exists pronounced as the divine Word; pronouncing himself partially, he makes relative, finite entia exist which cannot be himself because he is essentially indivisible and simple. Hence, the partiality, limitation and division are not in God but are pronounced by God, and this pronouncement is, in him, only an actuality and totally simple perfection of himself, similar to the human word and the consequent persuasion. The pronouncement of finite entia, therefore, is in God the absolute existence of such entia, an existence which has nothing of their imperfection. The result of this is their relative existence *in se*, like the existence that was pronounced by being, and when pronounced by being must be produced. Hence, the relative existence (finite entia) *pronounced* by God, precisely as pronounced, that is, as present in the pronouncement and as the actuality of this pronouncement, is called 'absolute existence of the relative existence'. It is not a pure idea empty of reality but simultaneously a perfect likeness or exemplar and an efficient cause of the entia.

The term therefore of this divine pronouncement of finite entia is logically posterior to the pronouncement of itself which is the generation of the Word. But this is not a chronological posteriority or a duality in the divine act. God, from eternity and with a single act, does both: he generates and creates. I say it

is logically posterior because God must first know himself who is total being, and know himself pronouncing himself and thus generating the Word. Pronouncing himself, he knows his pronounced self. Thus his pronounced self, as known by the pronouncer, is knowledge or wisdom of the pronouncer and is his actuality; it is wisdom which, communicated to the other two persons, pertains to the common essence of God. But the pronounced one, in so far as he is excellent and hence has his own, incommunicable subsistence (the Pronouncer, precisely as such, can never be the Pronounced — this would be a contradiction), is the person of the Word. Thus God pronouncer, having in himself *knowledge* of his pronounced self, total being, pronounces partial being by limiting total being. This limitation does not pass into in the Word who admits no limitation, but pertains to God's essential knowledge of himself, a knowledge proper to the pronouncer. Thus, because finite ens pronounced as knowledge remains in the essential knowledge of the pronouncer, its subsistence remains outside the Word and God. Moreover, all knowledge whether of himself or of finite entia, in so far as remaining in the pronouncer, is only an actuality of the Pronouncer; it is not different from him, as it is with us; we pronounce things in an object, that is, in being, which is not ourselves but something other. If therefore this actuality in God is to be called species or word-species, 'species' must be given a totally different meaning. As I said, in us *species* differs from the subject that intuits it and pronounces its content, whereas in God it is the subject that actuates itself or is actuated. This is because we are not being and do not have the objective form. God on the other hand is being intelligible *per se*, having essentially therefore the objective form. Hence the objectivity is a subjective actuality of him.

An actuality of God the pronouncing subject (intelligible *per se* and therefore object) is 'the absolute existence of relative existence, that is, of finite entia'.

1341. If 'the absolute existence of relative existence, that is, of finite entia' is an actuality of God, and if God is nothing but being, it follows that this divine actuality is also nothing but being, and this being is the *initial being* of all creatures, which, as I have so often said with St. Thomas, are not their own being but only a finite form of being, in other words pure finite reality.

This is the sense in which we must understand what the author of the divine names says, that God is being for all existing things (ἀλλ' αὐτός ἐστι τὸ εἶναι τοῖς οὖσι<sup>109</sup>).

If this opinion of this author has a true sense, it also has a totally erroneous sense. The *being* of creatures manifested to us differs entirely from the absolute being of creatures which is in God and is God. The absolute being of creatures is not the creatures themselves whose nature is to be relative entia, nor is it the being revealed to us in creatures; this being, revealed to us, is not the creatures, it is their intelligible cause, whereas their absolute being is both their intelligible cause and their total, direct, absolute cause. The being of creatures revealed to us is certainly one, most simple and most common, shared in by everything, but we know it only in its relationship with created realities. It is therefore simply the one, common act of all the acts of these realities, and consequently we see it as separate from the divine subject of which *in se* it is an actuality. When this divine actuality is separated from the divine subject, it immediately becomes something else; it is not God because God is an indivisible and totally simple subject, his actuality is not divided nor distinct from himself, but the same thing, it is he himself.

This unity and perfection of totality is essential to God. Hence as soon as we conceive something separate, identity is removed. This happens according to the rule I gave: 'Whenever something essential is removed from an entity, identity is lost and the same entity is no longer before our thought; it is another entity that cannot be taken for the first'. So, the being of creatures is not God but can be called *divine* or an appurtenance of God, because it is something present to us as a theosophical abstract, an effect of Creation. This explains why, in the book of divine names, God is fittingly called προεῖναι and ὑπερεῖναι, prior being and supra-being, and προὶν, pre-existent. *Being*, as we know it in creatures, is posterior 'to the absolute being of creatures, in the way that this absolute being exists in God' — the absolute being of creatures in God is an actuality of God, whereas the being of creatures in creatures is the actuality of creatures. Moreover, *being*, as known

<sup>109</sup> *De div. nomin.*, c. 8.

in creatures, makes our mind think that their abstract being must be in God, and this gives us an *a priori* demonstration of the divine existence (cf. *NE*, 3: 1457–1460). Hence, as St. Maximus says, ‘Being has a meaning (or demonstration) that behind it lies a preceding cause’\*,<sup>110</sup> ‘being, as we think it, is a sharing in prior being.’\*<sup>111</sup> Here the great commentator hastened to point out that we must not infer from this that God is composed of both being and prior being. On the contrary, he says, this pre-subsistent being in God (εἶναι προϋποστάν ἐν τῷ Θεῷ) is actuality or God’s will predetermined to create. This act of God’s will is the beginning of the being of creatures, such that in our mind (χατ’ ἐπινοίας) their being is something separate from the divine subject of which their being is an actuality, separate not by our free decision but through a law of nature created in this way. As a result of this separation, the being that is present to our mind and about which we generally reason, is as such no longer divine actuality — divine actuality is such only in so far as indistinctly united to the divine essence, to divine subjective being.<sup>112</sup>

Furthermore, the word which we pronounce when we affirm the subsistence of a created ens supposes the species in our mind as logically prior. This species is composed of 1. ideal being, lacking all reality, and 2. a pure reality without being, and hence not only relative but also existing in a relative mode, as I have said. This relative mode can be united to ideal being and thus become objectivised but not make one with it, because the absolute mode excludes the relative mode. In God, on the contrary, the object is the actuality of the subject because both are being. Consequently the distinction between being and what is contained in being is not present here; everything is an actuality of subsistent being. God’s pronouncement therefore, whether it generates the Word or creates finite entia, has no need whatsoever of species that are distinct from the word, that is, from the pronouncement and pronounced. It has much less need of species which contain the duality of an absolute element and a relative element. But the pronounced is

<sup>110</sup> St. Max., in *libro De div. nom.*, c. 5.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.\*

purely an actuality of being that is intelligible *per se*; it is simultaneously species and word, simultaneously object and pronounced, a species that is totally pronounced real being. This manner of creating therefore, by means of an intellectual pronouncement, excludes all multiplicity in God. It admits only a simple actuality which pertains to that totally perfect, totally simple and totally final act that is God, and is called distinct actuality purely through the abstraction we make on it. St. Maximus calls it a will predetermined to the creative act (θελήμα εἰς τὸ εἶναι κτίσιν προορισθείς).

#### Article 4

The false systems that resulted from the failure to see perfectly that the first cause had to be an intellect

1342. The erroneous systems veer between two systems and can always be reduced to two opposite classes, as we saw in ideology, and the same is true in ontology.

Some philosophers do not rise to the knowledge of the mind's nature and power, they find nothing divine in the mind. They are narrow-minded thinkers, materialists and sensists who have no ontology whatsoever. They proudly renounce it and, considering themselves the sole cultivators of solid knowledge, treat students of ontology as dreamers. This is a base pride but nevertheless it sets the tone for many scientific societies in Europe, where materialist prejudices are preserved through tradition and are jealously guarded as if it were a point of honour.

Other philosophers were amazed to discover that the intellect was more than they thought and that it could do great things. But they went to the other extreme: they endowed the human intellect with what applied only to the intellect considered in its ideal absolute, that is, the divine intellect. They took no care to define the limits restricting the particular understanding of man, which is only a participation in understanding, not the subsistent, totally finalised intellection.

1343. I have already observed that among us Vico had seen

that *understanding* was a species of *doing*, and he had pointed out that it was good sense that had suggested to the Latin peoples to say *factum* [done] for *verum* [true]. But he stopped there, while distinguishing accurately between God's perfect intelligence and man's share in it.<sup>113</sup>

Catholic truth is a beacon by whose light human minds navigate freely and safely. If the light is extinguished, they fall blindly into the most monstrous theories, are trapped, and either drown or founder. Emmanuel Kant separated knowledge from reality; for him, knowledge, like a separate world, was produced *a priori*. Thus, the existence of reality was uncertain, something excluded from knowledge. His disciple, Amadeus Fichte, was persuaded by Kant's teachings that knowledge was produced *a priori* by the human intellect. But having seen this unacceptable, absurd contrast, he was the first to conclude that the human intellect had also to produce reality indivisible from knowledge. He therefore added that both the subject ego and the World, and God, were produced by an act of the human intellect. He was thus the first to give creative power to the human mind; he constituted it an efficient cause. He called it 'A system of metaphysical egoism' or 'of transcendental idealism'.

Schelling, educated in this school, repeated the teaching that 'philosophising about nature was entirely the same as creating nature'.<sup>114</sup> Making the distinction between our ego as phenomenon and the ego as noumenon which underlies it, he said that the whole task of philosophy must consist in moving from the former to the latter. He called it 'objectivising the ego' (*das objectivieren des Ichs*). By this he meant turning the ego from apparent into real. He thus misused the word *object*, which is only (and for man can be only) idea, never reality itself *in se*, separate from idea. Because philosophy had now made the ego *real*, he claimed to find that in this real the ideal and the real, the objective and the subjective, man, the world and God all had the same identity. The author of this system called it the system 'of absolute Identity'.

According to Schelling therefore the ego (the primal,

<sup>113</sup> *De antiquiss. talor. sapientia*, c. 1.

<sup>114</sup> *Natur-Wissenschaft*, p. 3.



phenomenal ego) 'is not ens, not something real, because its sole property is the negative one (of being nothing)'.<sup>115</sup> As a result he had to search for the absolute underlying ego, which raised the question: 'How could this transition be made?' But unable to discover a way, he was forced to accept in the human being a direct intuition of the 'absolute ego', which he declared to be God.<sup>116</sup> But if human beings take possession directly of the absolute ego through an intuition, they do not go through the transition from the phenomenal ego to the absolute ego. Moreover, how do we know that the phenomenal ego is a phenomenon of the absolute ego, if this ego is given through an intuition which sees nothing but this ego?

Hegel, Schelling's disciple, said that Schelling's intuition was a gratuitous supposition: the transition had to be made by means of reasoning, and human beings did precisely that. Hegel did not notice that he thus reduced philosophy to a *fact*, and gratuitously asserted this fact without demonstrating it. Hence the whole of Hegel's philosophy is simply history, a mere description of this fact without proof, and impossible of any proof or reason.

He gives the phenomenal ego (already declared nothing by Schelling) a role in this fact, and makes what is nothing become the absolute ego, that is, ens, everything. He calls the subject of this transition 'idea' or eternal concept (*der ewige Begriff*), and the transformation of this idea continuously into nothing and into everything he calls dialectics, logic or philosophy. Having thus retained the definition Kant gave of the intellect as the faculty of concepts, Hegel concluded that 'philosophy had to consist in a perennial contradiction with the intellect', continuously destroying its limitations.

This idea, which from nothing (the phenomenal ego) has become everything (the absolute ego) was constituted by its own, essential movement and is therefore *in se*. But it develops

<sup>115</sup> *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*, Tübingen, 1800, vol. 3, pp. 43–49.

<sup>116</sup> Thus, in *Philosoph. Schriften*, Landshut, 1809, p. 152, he said that the proposition 'God is' is 'the most undemonstrated principle of all and the most undemonstrable; it is the principle most deprived of reason. Also the supreme principle of critical philosophy, "I am", is just as unreasonable.'

within itself, and in doing so, produces something other, which is *nature*. It then returns to itself and in doing this acquires consciousness of itself. It therefore now exists not only *in se* but *per se*, as spirit. This continuous cycle of the idea, or of the eternal concept, is a fact, and the idea exists contemporaneously at all points of this eternal cycle

1344. The principal hazard that shipwrecked this descriptive, historical system, becomes apparent when the system is applied to the human understanding. Georg Hegel has told all this; it is the work of his mind. Is he then this idea which develops, or is he only the spectator of the cycle of the idea, whose movements he asserts as if he saw them taking place on a stage. The philosopher's language is now becoming a babble. According to him 'philosophy is the reproduction of everything that the eternal concept does'. If he is able to make a reproduction with the act of his thought (whether this is intuition, as Schelling claimed, or immanent dialectic or movement of thought, or speculative thought, as Hegel claimed), then the act of his thought differs from the eternal concept, whose movement alone, and nothing more, he is reproducing. Reproduction supposes an antecedent production; the reproducer is not the first producer. Therefore the human individual, the philosopher, Hegel who reproduces is essentially different from the eternal concept, whose movement he repeats and recopies.

Again, granted this reproduction of what this concept does, then either every human being does it or only Hegel. Hegel attributes this philosophy to himself alone: he said that no one, not even his disciples, understood him fully. Nevertheless let us take the alternative that all human beings, with their thought, reproduce what the idea does, these reproductions are as many as the human beings. Because the eternal concept is one, the multiple reproductions cannot be the one movement of the eternal concept. If however only the philosopher Hegel has the power to reproduce with his speculative thought the perpetual *becoming* of the concept, there are many human individuals who are neither the eternal concept nor reproduce it in any way; there is therefore only one individual or just a few who can reproduce it.

1344a. Furthermore, a human being's speculative thought is one thing, but the human being who does the act of this

speculative thought is another. In fact we are told that the *idea* or eternal concept becomes *nature*, that is, becomes the material world. But no one, not even Hegel, in my opinion, has ever thought he has become the material world or even a mountain of granite, which is much smaller. We are therefore not the idea that is transformed, nor do we repeat within ourselves the idea's transformations; we simply remain a human being, sane, if sane, and mad, if mad. We are not therefore the idea that is transformed into all things. This marvellous idea or this eternal concept (and we each know we are not eternal), granted it exists as Hegel and other German philosophers describe it, can never be a human individual, whether this individual is a philosopher or not; it will be something totally different. Consequently, Hegel's eternal concept, if it exists, cannot be confused with 1. the human being, 2. the philosopher, 3. the human being's thinking, and 4. dialectic, as it is called, or philosophy produced by human thought.

But if the essential and inescapable difference between all these things and the idea or Hegel's eternal concept exists, his aim to reduce all things to one by establishing a system of real unity, a system of perfect unitarism is futile. The insuperable distinction between absolute and relative ens will always remain; what we can say about one we cannot say about the other; what we can say about God will never be applicable to us, whether we are philosophers or not. No philosopher, with his most sublime speculation, can ever *become* God, except in the way Lucifer did. The Word of God says to us, 'Which of you *by taking thought* can add to his stature one cubit?'<sup>117</sup> The divine Word is here telling us that he alone, the only Word of divine intelligence, is the true efficient cause and, as absolute ens, is capable of producing relative entia outside himself, which have existence *in se*. Human thought would only vainly and insanely aspire to this, no matter how many philosophical speculations it weaved for itself.

Mendelssohn, nurtured in the school of Leibniz, said, 'Nothing is possible; all reality supposes a corresponding thought. But no finite ens can exhaust with its thought all the reality of what exists; still less can it comprehend the possibility and

<sup>117</sup> Mt 6: 27†.

reality of all things. An infinite intelligence must therefore exist which perfectly conceives all possibility as possible, and all reality as real. This intelligence is God.<sup>118</sup> This, the discovery that the first efficient cause must be a first and perfect intellect results in a new and enlightening demonstration of the existence of God, without which the existence of the universe would be unexplained; it certainly does not result in the absurd confusion between divine and human intelligence manifested by the German philosophers.

1345. However they were not the only ones to err by attributing to the human intellect what is valid only for the divine intellect. At different times, many others fell into the same error, sometimes unaware, and generally all those did who were committed to it and tried to unify the subject and the object, making them one and the same thing. Aristotle himself was mistaken (as I have already observed) when he said that 'the understanding in act is the same as the understood in act and vice versa'. Having been misled by the analogy with sense, he made an excessive statement. The understood, in so far as object, is certainly united with the intelligent subject in an indivisible unity but does not become one with it, or ever lose the insuperable opposition between the human subjective principle and its object. Only in God is the object an actuality of the subject in so far as the object is the subject's internal term contained by the subject,<sup>119</sup> while at the same time the object, as container and subsistent *in se*, is not a mere object but a divine person existing *per se* (cf. the Book of Forms). The thing that prevented Aristotle from seeing in the human understanding the perpetual opposition between the ever real subject and the ever ideal

<sup>118</sup> *Hist. de la Philosophie allemande depuis Kant jusqu'à Hegel*, S. Willm, vol. 3, p. 413.

<sup>119</sup> Denys Petau, when speaking about the eternal species as a proof of the existence of God, correctly says: 'In whatever thing it (the more splendid, more ancient species of goodness) is thought to exist, it is not distinguished from the thing, nor does it inform it as some infused quality; otherwise it could be separated and removed from it by thought, nor will the species be so perfect that the mind cannot form a more perfect one'\* (*Theologic. Dogmatum, de Deo, Deique proprietati.*, I, 2, n. 6). The species can certainly be separated by thought, but when separated, thought no longer sees what it previously was when the species was united, but something else less perfect.

object was that the effect of knowledge remains in the subject due to the indivisible union between the subject and object. This knowledge, which is truly an actuality of the subject, is not the object itself but the effect of the object's presence to the subject.

What is contained in the ideal object and determines it to be a specific or generic idea is for us *the relative* vested with an absolute, objective form, as we have seen. Some philosophers, who made the opposite mistake, attributed it to the idea of God. They thus gave God what pertains solely to the human intellect. I have said elsewhere that God's ideas are totally different from man's (*Rinnovamento*, n. 462 ss.). But here I have also shown how everything that corresponds to ideas is, in God, precisely and only the unique Word, in so far as divine intelligence pronounces the absolute existence of relative entia, and this absolute existence is not truly distinguished *in se* from the pronounced Word.

We must, however, make the distinction between ideas already made or at least clearly indicated in some places in Plato. Specific and generic ideas are not more sublime, very abstract ideas. The latter are elementary or relative ideas of ens. Examples of these are one, essence, subsistence, etc; examples of relative ideas are the just, the good, the beautiful, etc. All of these ideas can most certainly be attributed to God, making them one and the same with the divine Word; we can in fact extract them from God by a theosophical abstraction. Strictly speaking, they do not limit being: some take a formal element from it, others a formal element from it in its three forms. Hence, they do not contain elements proper to relative ens but to *being* itself. Therefore they can together and without division be applied to God.

1346. What is more strange is that the German philosophers, from Fichte to Hegel, stopped at ideal thought because they wanted the philosophical system to be formed *a priori* and free of all experience. In thus separating thought from all reality and limiting it to the empty idea — so empty that Hegel confused it with nothing — they claimed that we ourselves by means of this idea produce, or the idea itself produces, the world and God. If they had endowed us with a real word, producer of real effects and creator, they would have stated a manifest falsehood but

not fallen into that contradiction. They were undoubtedly drawn into this absurdity by the need that the human mind feels, to find 'a perfect equation between intuitive knowledge and knowledge of predication', which is one of the forms of the ontological problem. This intellectual need gave rise to the extraordinary attraction human beings find in pure, *a priori* speculation, which is totally ideal, because they have no other intuitive means of knowledge than the idea. The solution to the problem, however, is found as soon as we demonstrate that there is indeed a mind in which this equation is perfectly accomplished, and this mind is the divine, not the human.

The German philosophers did not see this. They wanted the equation to be fulfilled in the human being, but found this impossible because in us the objective principle which gives intuitive knowledge is always distinct from the subjective principle which produces knowledge of predication. To escape from this tight corner, they wished to make the subject the same as the object and made one thing of them both. I say 'wished' because in fact there is only good will in their efforts; the rest is reduced to a gratuitous assertion contrary to the clear fact. The clear fact is that in all knowledge whatever kind it may be, the duality of the subject and the object always remains (cf. *NE*, 1: 327; 2: 474; 3: 1042, 1162–1170). Only in God is there an identification of the object as pure object that is an actuality of the intelligent subject, which is essentially intelligible. But this object, in addition to being in the intelligent ens as his actuality or knowledge, is also subsistent. Hence duality returns, but a duality of persons in the unity of essence. Thus, although knowledge in God as essential knowledge is not a duality, nevertheless it supposes duality as its necessary consequence because the intelligent person, actually understanding, generates the understood person, and the equation is formed by the equality and identity of the divine nature.

But the German thinkers did not manage to see this sublime truth. All they could do was imperfectly endow human beings with what is proper to the divine nature and thus do harm to its concept. They said that the subject and object must become the same through philosophical speculation and exempted themselves from clearly demonstrating such an extraordinary thesis.

However they were divided regarding the kind of

identification. Fichte made everything emerge from and return to the subject. According to him therefore, the identification was made by suppressing the object. Schelling preferred the object; for him the identification was obtained by suppressing the subject. Hegel thought the identification could be made by suppressing simultaneously both the subject and object, positing between them a *point of indifference* where both were annihilated and from which afterwards both were reborn. But he could not explain how and why, *stat pro ratione voluntas* [the will takes the place of reason].

1347. The solid and resolute affirmation of these philosophers made such a profound impression on German imaginations that the principle of these thinkers remained fixed there like an unmoveable prejudice similar to the God Terminus on the Campidoglio. No one could remove it, not even the meditations of those who viewed pure speculation as idiocy. An example is Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi who, after losing faith in pure thought, countered this philosophy with a system of sentimentalism. It is precisely Jacobi who declared the immutability of the real existence of known things, when we have knowledge of them; the same Jacobi who energetically defended realism against idealism! He says, amongst other things:

Concerning the essential truth of my knowledge, it is indifferent to me whether Christ is *per se* outside me or whether he corresponds or not in reality to my concept. The only important thing is that he is in you; and the truly divine Ens is in you because whatever the human being can intuit, Christ represents it in name and image.<sup>120</sup>

And in a letter to Lavater in 1791 he confirms the same thought when he says that for him 'the only conceivable philosophy of religion is mysticism, but less still does he find anything of value in *historical faith*.'<sup>121</sup> In many other places he similarly separates every historical reality from religion. He must therefore be doing one of the following two things: either 1. rejecting the real, to which existence *in se* is subjectively essential because it is in this that the real precisely consists, and

<sup>120</sup> *Von den göttl. Dingen und ihrer Offenbarung*, 1811, p. 63.

<sup>121</sup> Letter 197. Cf. Letter 226 to Stolberg.

limiting himself to the world of ideas, or 2. inserting the real in ideas and again limiting himself to these alone. Jacobi's principle therefore is exactly that of the other philosophers whom he opposes. If there is any difference, it is not in the principle but in the application. Jacobi reproaches them for not sufficiently acknowledging the real, that is, *feeling*, which is in ideas. Perhaps he changes the word *idea* into that of *feeling* but fundamentally it is the same case: he says that the purpose of his philosophy is *truth* that is *native* to us, not *scientific truth*. But what is truth native to us when he excludes historical truth and also the real as outside the soul, something which the soul itself affirms, and without the real it affirms what is false? He reproaches Fichte's philosophy for wanting to *create* the real, for wanting to create God. But what does he substitute for Fichte's creation? He places God in the soul without creating him, and it is still a case of having God in the idea. 'God, acknowledged by me, fills my feeling to the utmost.<sup>122</sup> But whether God exists *in se* is indifferent to me.' This is a non-knowing the nature of knowledge by way of a word; this nature necessarily requires something subsistent that is simultaneously in and outside the knower. That which is outside is that which is inside, and because inside, constitutes the knower's knowledge. It is not therefore indifferent whether it exists *in se* outside, because this 'outside' is the only object that is inside. If for example I affirm the existence of *jesus* Christ and what I affirm does not exist *in se*, I affirm a falsehood. To say: 'I am satisfied to affirm that *JESUS* Christ exists, but indifferent whether he exists historically outside me' is the same as saying: 'I am satisfied with my illusion' or 'I am indifferent as to whether I am deluded or not.' This is a false mysticism which supposes that *illusion* can equal *real perception* and the truth of judgment.

1347a. We must carefully note however that all these philosophies of protestant Germany, lacking a solid foundation, are not only erroneous but they themselves adjust their error. All the effort of their laborious arguments is always directed to this: 'to make illusion equal to reality, and attribute an equal portion to error and truth'. Thus Fichte says: 'The ego sets the

<sup>122</sup> Letter 118 to Lavater.



non-ego against itself, which makes an equation of it.' In other words: 'The ego deludes itself by thinking that its development is something different from and contrary to itself, whereas it is the same.' Schelling stops at this equation of Fichte and says: 'Both the ego and the non-ego are illusions. The only true thing is their absolute identity.' Hegel says: 'The idea develops in perpetual illusions which it makes for itself.' Jacobi places the illusion in our feeling; he says: 'Everything is in this feeling, and it is indifferent whether what in this feeling appears to be outside is in fact outside.' They all compose the philosophy of internal illusions. They are not truly interested in finding something different from ourselves, something that may be true in itself, as if what appears in our intelligence as something outside us and existing *in se* was not truly external and existing *in se*, or as if truth or falsehood were indifferent. This last simulation supposes the principle that 'illusion is equivalent to truth', in which case truth no longer has any value for us.

Jacobi tells us that the existence of the historical Christ is indifferent 'to the essential truth of the concept we have of him'. If in saying this, he meant he was content with the idea of this person and that he is not pronouncing any judgment on the person's real, historical existence, he would be weaving the truth solely of ideas; he would be unaware that thinking only ideas is an imperfect thinking, insufficient to satisfy subjective intelligence. He would therefore show that he does not know that it is proper and essential to this subjective intelligence to want to be joined by way of perception and word to real entia and to all ens. Finally, he would not know the profound nature of the word of the mind without whose teaching there is no complete, ontological philosophy. Moreover, because an intelligent being cannot be satisfied with the total lack of the intellective word, the result would be what happens to all philosophers who have limited themselves to pure ideas: they would denature the nature of ideas by giving them purely arbitrarily the activity of the word, which is what Jacobi in effect does by positing feeling in ideas or ideas in feeling.

## Article 5

## The principle of the dianoeticity of ens

1348. We have seen that the nature of the first, absolute Cause is 'to be an intellect'. We have therefore a principle very rich in consequences. With it we can solve the most difficult questions of ontology and establish a universal doctrine about the Cause.

The first consequence we draw from it is the explanation of the dianoeticity of ens, of which I have spoken. We saw that there is necessarily an intellectual element in the constitution of real ens, such that real ens could not exist without this element, could not be fully ens. Hence, whenever we think real ens anoetically, that is, separate from every intellectual element, we are using, in an imperfect and partial way of thinking, a hypothetical abstraction which gives us an ens that is impossible *in se* and exists only before our mind.

Indeed, if everything is the effect of a First Intellect, then clearly this effect must retain some vestige of its cause and have some intellectual element, and an *essential* relationship with the object that is the term of the causative Intellect.

This recalls, if we consider the matter carefully, what St. Thomas deduced from the intellectual nature of the First Cause, that is, every ens must have an *intelligible being* which logically precedes *real* or *material being and its own being*. Hence the real existence of finite things involves such an essential relationship with their intelligible being, existing in their Intellectual Cause that produces them, that without this relationship they could not exist, and consequently could not be understood.

## Article 6

The ontological cause by which anything not involving contradiction is thought *possible*

1349. From what has been said, we have as a second corollary the explanation of the psychological fact that we call 'possible everything that does not involve contradiction', so that 'to be thinkable' and 'to be possible' are considered synonymous in

meaning (cf. *NE*, 1: 378, 395; 2: 543). We say something is thinkable because it does not involve contradiction; it is therefore possible. Are we right in this reasoning which pertains to human common sense? Everything that does not exist is not possible if there is no cause capable of producing it. We cannot say that what is thinkable is, by the very fact that it is thinkable, possible, if we do not suppose 1. a mind that can think all that does not involve contradiction and 2. that the thought alone of it can produce it. Only in the case that we suppose this mind, then everything thinkable by it is also truly possible. To admit such a Mind that thinks the thinkable is the same as admitting the Cause capable of producing it.

Consequently there exists deep in human understanding a hidden pre-notion of the First Cause. Through this pre-notion our mind can suppose that there is an absolute Mind, which is at the same time Cause of all things. Our understanding bases with total certainty all its reasoning on this underlying presupposition and pronounces this evident principle: 'Everything thinkable is possible, and all that does not involve contradiction is thinkable.'

This light, this pre-notion, is given to the human mind by ideal *being* which is the object of our mind's natural intuition. But the pre-notion is given hiddenly because our mind deduces it without any reflection to deduce it; it deduces it solely in order to use it for further consequences. Hence, this pre-notion pertains not only to direct knowledge but to hidden knowledge (*PSY*, 2: 1479–1484, 1667–1676). The hidden deduction is: 'Being, intuited by me, would not be, if it were not known to itself. It is therefore not only an object but an intelligent subject. Being contains everything; it is therefore a Mind that knows everything. But because every ens comes from being, the being that is a Mind is also the fitting Cause of everything knowable and thinkable.' Hence it is a truth that the First Cause is an Intellect, and common sense or the consent of all people supports this; it is implicitly admitted by all as the hidden base of all reasoning without exception.

## Article 7

Solution to the ontological problem under the third form: 'To find an equation between intuitive knowledge and predicated knowledge'

1350. The knowledge that the First Cause is an Intellect solves the ontological Problem under its third form, which I expressed as: 'to find an equation between intuitive knowledge and predicated knowledge.'

I said that the difficulty in solving this problem arose from our imperfect knowledge of the *essences* of things, essences which constitute the object of our intuitions. Not everything that we find in sensible *realities* and pertains to predicated knowledge is present in the essence. Thus a part of predicated knowledge remains without a reason because every reason is grounded in essences. But the essences given to our intuition are imperfect because we intuit them in purely ideal being. Although ideal being certainly shows us the possibility of finite entia, it cannot receive into itself their sensibility and reality; the sensibility and reality remains, relative to us, in its subjective condition. Hence our understanding uses finite entia as obscure signs that transport it to something real and unknown, but it cannot see the real, objective essence of such feelable entities.

However, the ontological requirement of the human mind is satisfied as soon as it has managed to understand and reflect that a First Cause exists which is an Intellect. With this knowledge, our mind also infers that if a First Intellect is the total Cause of all finite entia, then that first intellect must have within itself, as I said, their *intelligible being*, that is, their *essence* which is not imperfect and empty like that of human understanding, but adequate and real. Consequently nothing can be in the reality of the entia and nothing predicated of them that is not already in their intelligible essence, which is intuited and indeed actuated *in se* by the creative act of the first Cause.

Hence, the equation that is vainly sought in human understanding, an understanding which simply makes things known but does not produce them, is found in the divine Intellect, as in that which, as First and total cause of all things, totally contains them in itself as intelligible and understood essences. Anyone

therefore who could see these essences as they are in God, would fully know the World without needing any exterior experience and organ-endowed sensitivity; in other words, they would know the World totally as it is, *a priori*. This *a priori* knowledge and composition of the real World is the highest level of Wisdom, and the human mind restlessly tends to it. But due to the imperfection with which, as I said, the human mind knows essences, that is, the intelligible being of the World, it pursues different paths. It proposes to itself the problem of the equation, and up to this point there is nothing reprehensible in the mind. But the philosopher, before knowing whether and how he can solve the problem, too readily assumes the prejudice that it can be solved and directly solved. This prejudice, like all other prejudices, is certainly anti-philosophical but nevertheless it strongly excites his pride. He applies himself to finding a direct solution and, lacking the materials necessary for the task, supplies them with his imagination. The outcome was the *a priori* systems that originated and appeared in Germany, which were most attractive solely because of their speculative form. This *a priori* form, lacking images of any value, is attractive of its own accord because it makes *a priori* a kind of trace of the wisdom proper to the supreme Mind. On the other hand the philosopher who does not allow himself to be prejudiced and, before conceiving the proud hope that he can make his mind equal to the divine mind, proceeds with rigorous argument, reasons with a calm mind and learns that 'theoretical knowledge' that contains all reality does indeed exist, but only in the first Intellect, universal Cause, and cannot be in any finite mind unless this mind is admitted to the direct intuition of the divine Exemplar.

#### Article 8

Why the human mind thinks that it cannot know things fully unless it knows their cause

1351. Children ask the 'why' of everything. It seems to them that they do not know the thing without this 'why'. This psychological fact is acknowledged by Aristotle who said: 'All

people think that what they call wisdom concerns first causes and principles.' But he does not clearly explain this fact; he simply bases it on another fact, that first things and causes are more knowable than other things: Μάλιστα δὲ ἐλπισταὶ τὰ πρῶτα καὶ αὐτὰ.<sup>123</sup>

But the clear and ultimate ontological reason comes from the knowledge that the first cause is an Intellect. This Intellect is the total cause of all the entia we experience, through an Exemplar, which is an actuality of its own essence. In our intuitive knowledge we do not know real things but only their universal, formal intelligibility. If we wish to know real things, we must have recourse to an affirmation or predication which, strictly speaking, is not *knowledge* but *persuasion*, as I said in the previous Article.<sup>124</sup> *Persuasion* is founded on sensations, which are purely obscure effects and signs that stimulate our mind to turn from them to being and to the ens that they indicate but do not present. Aware that these signs and effects of being are not being itself, we ask ourselves their cause; in other words, we are looking for what is *intelligible* because we see that while the effects and signs are not intelligible, they suppose something intelligible. This intelligible something is being, which is limited by them, that is, being precisely as their cause and not the cause of other things. In our search for this cause, as long as we find or seem to find some cause which itself is feelable and of a finite reality, we cannot be satisfied because even in this cause, or what we think a cause, there is still the same obscurity, which persuades us that something exists but gives no knowledge of its nature. So we pass from one cause to another without ever being satisfied, until we finally think a cause which is intelligible *per se* and contains totally the real thing that we want to know free from all obscurity. The generality of people take a few steps along this path and then stop, considering themselves satisfied (cf. *Logica*, 1173 ss.), but the philosopher is the thinker who wants to go beyond this horizon of knowledge, until he discovers its final term. At the beginning he does not know where he

<sup>123</sup> *Metaph.*, 1: 2.

<sup>124</sup> The distinction being *knowledge* and *persuasion* is pointed out by Lud. Ant. Muratori: 'The double genus of truths: one genus produces knowledge, the other persuasion'\* (*De ingenior. modert.*, 1: 1 in *argum.*

will end but he is persuaded that this term exists and that he will truly reach the region lit up by the sun and then finally be able to touch the sun with his hands. If he is obstinate in this preconceived confidence, originating from his ignorance of what he wants to discover but has not yet discovered, he runs the risk of making his locomotive jump its tracks and precipitate himself and his fellow passengers into some abyss (cf. *Logica*, 1179 ss.). But if he proceeds cautiously, free from proud preconceptions, he will come to know that a fully intelligible cause, containing the total intelligibility of all things, certainly exists. This is the first cause, the most perfect Intellect, of which the Exemplar of the real world is an actuality. This Exemplar is not composed of pure ideas, like the *ides* we have, but is itself the *intelligible being* of this world. Note however we come to the first cause by deduction, we do not directly see it.

Aristotle therefore rightly placed the highest knowledge, which he called wisdom, in the knowledge of causes and principles.<sup>125</sup> But we should pay careful attention to the perplexity embraced by the mind of this great philosopher, when he asks himself if such sublime knowledge is accessible to man or must be considered pertinent only to God.<sup>126</sup> Because of this query, he saw confusedly what I am saying, that such knowledge is accessible to us up to a certain level but not completely. I stated that it is accessible to us in this sense: 'We can know that there is a First Cause, and that this First Cause is a totally perfect Intellect, and in this Intellect all things are fully and totally intelligible.' But it is not accessible to us in this other sense: 'This full

<sup>125</sup> 'It is clear that knowledge is wisdom concerning certain causes and principles'\* (*Metaphy.*, 1: 1). He says 'concerning *certain* causes' to indicate the final causes.

<sup>126</sup> 'For this reason its acquisition might justly be supposed to be beyond human power, since in many respects human nature is servile; in which case, as Simonides says, "God alone can have this privilege."\* He then says that this is certainly the most divine knowledge but that 'knowledge is divine in only two ways: as God principally has it or as knowledge of divine things. He also says that the wisdom he is discussing has these two endowments simultaneously. Hence he grants it to man but adds that God has it *principally* (*Metaphy.*, 1: 2). The question is certainly not precisely defined with but it shows how Aristotle's mind suspected that such a wisdom was and was not proper to man, although he could not clearly determine the limit of human knowledge.

knowability which all things have in the First Cause is not intuited by us in our present condition.' Thus, such knowledge is proper to God alone, not to man.

### Article 9

Why supreme value is attributed to theoretical knowledge

1352. I have noted the attraction that a pure, *a priori* knowledge has for human understanding. I said this presupposes that all things exist in a first cause, which is a pure Intellect. Only this spontaneous pre-notion which supposes the first cause to be an intellective nature can explain the other psychological facts I have indicated: 1. that thinkability and possibility are taken as convertible concepts; 2. that an equation between knowledge of intuition and that of predication is sought, and 3. that finite things are not thought of as known unless we have recourse to their cause.

A further fact is the supreme value given to *contemplation* and *purely theoretical knowledge*. Aristotle notes that the highest knowledge is purely speculative and theoretical; it is sought for itself and not for some use we may wish to make of it, or for the profit we want to draw from it. He concludes that it alone is *free* and not the servant of others,<sup>127</sup> a thought which is as true as it is noble and lofty.

Theologians, including St. Thomas, go still further. They say that beatitude consists 'in an act of intellect'.<sup>128</sup>

However, if we consider our present human condition, these sublime opinions seem enigmas. We need many other things besides pure speculation if we are to be content (let alone

<sup>127</sup> 'In such a way that, if they philosophised in order to avoid ignorance, they clearly wanted to know for knowledge's sake and not for some use. The fact itself attests this. After they had found nearly all the things pertaining to subsistences and necessities, to comfort and the conduct of life, they sought out a prudence similar to this. It is therefore obvious that we do not seek it for any other use. Just as we call a man free who has himself as end and not someone else, so this knowledge alone, of all knowledge, is free; it alone in fact is for its own sake' (*Metaphy.*, 1: 2).

<sup>128</sup> *S.T.*, I, q. 26, art. 3.



blessed) with our state. Aristotle himself was aware that the beatitude naturally found in contemplation of the truth is something divine rather than human.<sup>129</sup> Cicero expressed still more vividly the defective element in natural knowledge when he said that the knowledge of many things would mean little to him if he could not communicate his knowledge to another.

Nevertheless, everybody senses some truth in these opinions. This is certainly the case of the wise men who formulated them. And the reason, I say, was the pre-notion that the First and perfect Cause is an intellect. If it is an intellect and this intellect must be blessed, the perfect beatitude it enjoys must consist in an intellectual act. But if other intellectual natures exist through an act of the First Intellect as first and total cause, their beatitude must equally be analogous to the beatitude of their creative Cause. The Intellect-creator could have a concept of no other beatitude than his own because there could be no other. If finite, intellectual natures had to be ordered to beatitude, they would have to share in the sole *essence* of beatitude, which is in the First Intellect.

But I must explain this and will begin with the experimental and conscious knowledge we have of human nature.

1353. We must first note that the intellect we naturally have is imperfect because it intuitively empty, virtual being. The potency to know real things lies in this intuition (cf. *Logica*, 334).

Just as conscious, truly subjective life is present in the union with being and therefore present only in intellectual entia, so beatitude, which is 'the complete act of life', can be present only in complete union with being. But this complete union of the finite subject with being, in all being's essential universality and totality, is made only by means of intellect. Therefore beatitude must consist in an act of intellect.

But nature bestows on the human intellect simply a very incomplete and totally initial union with being. The intellect must complete this union, in so far as possible, through its intellectual acts, drawing into act the potency it has to know.

In this task it strives to pass from its intellectual potency into the act that can give it a complete union with being. But in doing

<sup>129</sup> *Nicom.*, 10: 7.

this it meets two obstacles. The first and necessary obstacle is the limitation of the real things that are naturally given to it to know; they are of course simply the feelable things that compose the universe. The second and non-compulsory obstacle is its own will.

In the first necessary obstacle, the only other entia that the intellect can naturally know are real entia. Consequently it cannot be completely united with real being, which is infinite and cannot be attained by a perceiving intellect. Nevertheless, St. Thomas notes that there is something infinite even in the knowledge of finite things: intelligible light, through which 'there is some participation in beatitude in what the speculative sciences consider'.<sup>130</sup> However, this participation is certainly not beatitude because in these sciences, only the ideal form of being is intuited, and hence not the whole of being in its two other forms. But because even ideal being is something divine, there is in this speculation some trace of true beatitude, something felt that unites and has a nature different from all sensible delights.

The second obstacle is posited by human free will, and when positing it, the will simultaneously posits in us something contrary to beatitude, something pertaining to unhappiness.

We need therefore to see how the human being distinguishes between *speculative understanding*, to which *ideas* principally pertain, and *practical understanding*, to which pertain both the word of the mind and the assents we make and which results in the moral quality. Because the human intellect is naturally a potency to know real things and speculate on them, the task of reducing this potency into act and guiding it to enrich itself with

<sup>130</sup> 'The total consideration of the speculative sciences cannot extend beyond the knowledge given by sensible things. Ultimate beatitude, which is the final perfection of human beings, cannot consist in the knowledge they have of sensible things. Nothing is perfected by what is lower unless in the lower there is some participation in the higher. — Thus, our intellect is not perfected by the form of a stone in so far as the stone has the form of a stone but in so far as the form shares in something similar to what is above the human intellect, that is, an intelligible light, or something of this kind. — It remains true therefore that the ultimate beatitude of the human being cannot be in what the speculative sciences consider. But just as sensible substances share in some likeness of higher substances so what the speculative sciences consider is a participation in true, perfect beatitude'\* (S.T., I-II, q. 3, art. 6.).

a greater knowledge and a greater union with being is mostly entrusted to the subject. But the subject is the will. Hence, in so far as the will operates by means of the intellect, the intellect is called practical understanding. Thus, we see that in the First Intellect, which is totally perfect and does not pass from potency to act but is eternally in act, there cannot be any distinction between theoretical and practical understanding, except in an imperfect way of speaking, when we apply to it the distinctions in ourselves. In the First Intellect, the Intellect must be one, totally simple, theoretical and practical act, that is, it must also be willed, or rather, the intellection that understands is the intellection that wills, and to will is to operate.

In us therefore the will is distinguished from the intellect as that which draws the intellect from potency into act, directs it and adds to it the subjective, real energy proper to the will. This subjective force called will gives the understanding practical force, produces the word, that is, produces affirmation, assents, acknowledgements. By these acts the personal subject can unite himself more closely to known being or disunite himself and oppose it. This explains our moral perfection and imperfection (cf. *PE*, 114–181; *ER*, Moral System, 93–143; *CS*, 23–31; *Stor.comparativa*, cc. 1 and 8). In my works I have often demonstrated that all moral sins arise in us by a *willed error* (cf. *NE*, 3: 1279–1286, 1314, 1329, 1334, 1372; *Logica*, 241, 246, 285). Hence all *moral evil* and all *moral good* is reduced to an act of the practical understanding.

1354. It must also be noted that although in us the volitive energy is distinct from the intellective action, nevertheless whenever this energy is united to the intellective action, it perfects this action. In fact, when the pure intellect, as it exists in us, is divided from the will, it cannot in any way know *good*; it is like something that cannot be known unless it is experienced. If, on the other hand, some goods seem to be known in some way without being experienced, this is because we have experiences other goods similar to, or at least analogous, to them. But if in fact we never experienced any good (which is certainly impossible), we could have no knowledge of good, nor could an intellective or rational subject that knew no good enjoy any good. But the intellective and rational subject experiences good and evil only through love or aversion, which pertain to the

practical energy of the will. The will, with its act, perfects the understanding, endowing it with the power to be united to good in such a way as to know good by experiencing it. Hence, to be united is to know, and to know is to be united. From this we infer that if there is a perfect Intellect, it must simultaneously be a will, that is, have the energy of will because there must be in it all that pertains to the perfection of its cognitive act and must not receive this from outside. An Intellect that were a subsistent subject would be of this kind, because the real energy of the subject would be energy of the Intellect.

The First Intellect is of this kind. Everything it might will or operate therefore, it would will and operate by theorising. Theorising would thus be simultaneously its only act, with no distinction, an all-powerful act, and its beatitude would also consist in this act.

*Theory*, therefore, considered at this level, is seen without contradiction to be the blessed life. Contradiction and difficulty are present only in the theory or theoretical knowledge in human beings, which is imperfect and lacks what is more sublime and exquisite in knowledge, that is, *good*. This *good* is found in human beings only through the work of a different power, the power of the will or of the free energy of the subject. Nevertheless, the mind glimpses that beatitude *in se*, considered absolutely, can be only *theory*, a pure, perfect, intellectual act. The person who has ascended to this concept has forgotten himself.

If he then returns with his thought to himself, he will have to make other considerations. In the natural order, when we use our free will perfectly, we do not fill our understanding with errors (this perfect use is the foundation of morality); on the contrary all our acknowledgements or practical judgments of esteem about the value of things accord with the truth. Hence, we have not only ordered our intellect well, bathed in light, but our affections as well as our operations observe the order of being, and we find ourselves in perfect concord and harmony with this ordered being. Consequently, the order and moral good of the total human being depends on the act of understanding strengthened by willed energy, because everything in us that pertains to person seconds and obeys this act as a dominant act, including our lower powers in so far as they depend on person.

But if human moral perfection and dignity depend on one act of practical understanding, we must also consider that *happiness* itself does not come into existence except solely with an act of understanding, an act which truly satisfies us and makes us happy (cf. *SP*, bk.2, c. 1 ss.). There is no happiness without awareness; awareness assumes within itself and unifies all lower goods, and is an intellectual act (*Storia comparat. e critica* etc., c. 8, [a. 3], §5–7). In fact we have seen elsewhere that the object of the understanding embraces everything, all forms and appearances; it embraces sensible real things in so far as these are so contained in being that human rational activity eminently also contains sensitive activity (*PSY*, 1: 249–264; *Logica*, 307). Thus, if the intellective act contains an object that embraces everything, we see how with this act we can unite ourselves to all being, and in that perfect act that has the perfect object must be found the beatitude of every intellective ens.

This conclusion is deduced *a priori* from the concept of the intellect and of the first, essential intellect. The teaching of Christianity not only accords with it but completes and elevates it by placing human beatitude ‘in the vision of God’.

1355. But what is the difference between the beatitude we see as proper to God and the beatitude that can be in us?

1. We are given the object of our understanding. If the perfection of this object and the practical act of our understanding must constitute our beatitude, we do not have it through ourselves — it has to be given us (*TCY*, 85 ss.). On the contrary, the essential Intellect has this object *per se*, and the object is the Intellect itself.

2. The only things given to human nature are 1. ideal being (an object devoid of reality), a power with which it can enrich ideal being with finite and sensible realities, and 2. certain abstract information extracted from the realities. Consequently, in the order of human nature there cannot be a perfect beatitude, only a natural moral perfection and satisfaction, at the most. The First Intellect is an object totally complete in itself through its very essence.

3. Although we are naturally given an ideal object, our natural understanding does not possess reality, not even finite reality; hence we cannot dominate reality. Although finite reality can be known imperfectly, partially and accidentally, it

is not dominated by the pure human intellective principle. Therefore, outside the human intellective principle there is a reality that is both infinite and finite. As a result, a collision and a struggle can take place between ourselves (real subjects) and the reality different from us, which is neither in our power nor subject to our rational potency to control. The result is pain in a very general sense. Relative to infinite reality, that is, God, the struggle can originate from us, depending on whether we make the right or wrong use of our practical understanding. In the case of finite *reality*, it collides with human reality, independently of our will, due to the laws which finite reality obeys. Human nature has no means or power to avoid the pain that finite realities can cause; acting according to their own laws, they can oppose human reality with contrary forces. We cannot with the act of our understanding avoid this pain in the present life. The intervention of the First Cause is necessary to keep us from these contingent sufferings, which could also destroy human reality. Consequently, both our preservation in this natural life and our immunity from natural sufferings depend not on our understanding but on something else, that is, the First Cause of all things. This Cause itself however, as an Intellect that with its act alone has all reality in itself and fully dominates it, cannot be subject to any opposition or penalty which might diminish its beatitude.

4. As a result of the limitation of the human intellect, whose natural object excludes reality, the subjective principle of the human being, precisely because a reality, is also excluded from the object of the intellect. It needs to become its object later, as I explained in the first of my psychological works, where I spoke about the formation or constitution of the human *myself* (cf. *NE*, 2: 439–442, 980–982). All reality therefore and the subjective principle itself are not naturally in control of the intellect because they are not its object. When later the subjective principle becomes objectivised (its animality is first objectivised through an immanent natural act) (*PSY*, 1: 249–253), it begins to acquire some power over the realities which ‘through perception’ enter into its object as objectivised. This is not a great power; it extends only to realities directly or indirectly *perceived*. It is not a power of the intellect which finishes in intuition but of the real

subjective principle that uses the intellect. This explains the difference mentioned above between the two faculties of *will* and *intellect*. Through this difference the human intellect is not *per se* practical; it is the will that is practical, that is, operative, or speaking more generally, the subjective principle. It unites itself to the intellect, and this force which is added to the intellect constitutes the practical understanding. On the contrary, in the First Intellect, complete reality is naturally in its object, which is itself. Hence, the First Intellect is simultaneously speculative and practical without any difference. It is also only one act which dominates and enjoys all reality, and in this complete enjoyment lies its beatitude.

5. Although our practical understanding cannot produce our beatitude, it can in some way produce our moral perfection. This consists in the use of the powers under our control (the first of which is the intellect) so that we do not oppose the totality of being but consent to it in so far as we know its totality. But here there is no moral perfection except on condition that we know absolute Being as good, and we order everything to it (*Storia critica* etc. c. 8, [art. 3], §7). We can, of course, know absolute Being naturally but solely through logical determinations. These, as object of intuition, do not truly make us enjoy God himself but something divine; such an object is the total foundation that a natural morality can have. This is the imperfection and limitation of nature, to whose aid God came by constituting man in a supernatural state in which God gave man an incipient perception of himself. Thus, morality attained its perfect species, having found for its end a good not only divine but a good that was God. This however was not beatitude because God was given to us to be felt as a hidden good whose luminous power was intellectually felt. It was God given certainly as object of our intellect but with a very faint perception. The great design therefore that the Creator conceived and effected concerning humanity was to demand virtue from us, a virtue complete in its species, that is, supernatural. In this way we merited beatitude, which God gave as a reward for this virtue. Therefore everything in us, or we can hope for as most excellent and is the greatest good in this life, is not theoretical

or *speculative knowledge* but the acquisition of virtue and moral perfection, which requires another *practical knowledge*. The practical is, as I said, divided in us from the speculative, and by means of intelligence that is guided and strengthened by the will, unites us to the totality of being in the greatest way possible. Moreover, granted that this reward, beatitude, has been bestowed on us, our practical intellect identifies with the speculative because the object of the speculative intellect is then most real, is absolute reality. Thus, the speculative intellect joins the object to itself in an immovable way, a way similar to that in which it naturally has ideal being. After joining the object, it possesses all reality solely by the intuition of the object. The subjective principle now has somewhere to spend all its energy, free and independent of every other separate, finite reality. Thus for us also, complete beatitude must consist in an act of the *speculative intellect*. This act of the speculative intellect however in which human beatitude consists, is supremely different from the act of speculative knowledge in this life. But we have seen that when many philosophers spoke about the human intellect, they considered the perfection *in se* of the intellect, a perfection that is not proper to the human being but to God, and in this way attributed to the human intellect certain properties which are true only of the divine. Consequently, they made even beatitude consist in a speculative, not a practical act, unaware that such an act differs infinitely from those speculative acts we can carry out in our present condition, as for example acts pertaining to the human sciences. But, as St. Thomas wisely observes, we can say that ‘our speculative acts have a greater likeness with the act of beatitude than the acts of the practical intellect’, although these, if virtuous, can have a greater value as acts that prepare for and lead to the act of beatitude that God will bestow as their reward.<sup>131</sup> We must nevertheless be aware that even in this life we can perform a speculative act that is

<sup>131</sup> ‘Final happiness, that is, contemplative happiness, consists in its’ (the speculative intellect) ‘act. Hence, acts of the speculative intellect are, through similarity, closer to final happiness than habits of the practical intellect, although the latter are perhaps closer by way of preparation or merit’\* (*De Virt.*, q. 1, art. 7 ad 4).



simultaneously practical, an act that looks more like beatitude and at the same time is more perfect in the moral order. Theologians call it supernatural *contemplative* life, which is not scientific speculation or reasoning, but direct, willed intuition; its object is God who really communicates himself to the soul although only in an incipient mode. In this contemplation therefore the pure object of the intellect is object of the will, without the will's taking anything from elsewhere. Hence the two acts unify, they become one sole act. If, however, this act does not attain perfect beatitude, it is because the divine object is not sufficiently given to be contemplated, and therefore the lower powers are still not absorbed by the supreme power, and their terms are not absorbed by the life of the divine object. Moreover, in God the intellective, volitive act is always one and always in act, and hence does not multiply through interruptions. It is always such that it penetrates the very depths of the object, that is, his total self.

6. When the object-Being of the intellect has manifested itself in its reality, the acts of our speculative understanding acquire practical power, if we desire this. When this happens in the present life (only through a generous manifestation of Being, that is, of God), human beatitude begins with the affectionate contemplation of God. Only in the next life is this beatitude completed with the full intellective vision of the Intellect that is the First Cause and is itself a real and most complete, subsistent object. But the human intellect is still purely subjective, seeing and enjoying the object as something other and not as its own self. This is another profound difference between the essential beatitude of God and the beatitude of finite intelligence, which is a *participation* in that beatitude. But the intuition or vision of Being revealed in supernaturally differs categorically from the natural intuition of being. Ideal being makes us know but has no action; on the other hand, real, absolute Being is not purely and simply object but subsistent and, as subsistent person to whom the human understanding is united, is active and emitting the personal spirit who subjectively unites himself to the human person in the way that supernatural anthropology explains to the best of its ability. A speculative act of this kind exists therefore which

embraces everything in itself; it is the complete life in which every other lower life is included and, through eminence, absorbed.

### Article 10

The principle that gives rise to the traces of intelligence present in everything in the universe

1356. The principle that 'the first cause is an intellect' gives the following result: 'All that exists in the universe must have an order,' because an intellect must essentially operate with wisdom and not sillily. If it acted sillily, it would not be an intellect.

The explanation for this is that every non-first intellect is a participation in the first intellect. In fact, a non-first intellect is a subjective principle to which being manifests itself. The first Intellect is also being, a *per se* subsistent intellection of its *per se* intelligible self. But being is *per se* ordered. Therefore an intellect, as pure intellect, sees and makes only things that are *per se* ordered. Thus, if all the things of the universe are an effect of the first intellect, they must be fully ordered.

If we now proceed *a posteriori* and consider world entia, we see in them all, including those lacking intelligence, a wonderful order. Minerals, vegetables and animals act according to fixed laws and order themselves and help each other, as if they had intelligence, everything tending to its own preservation and perfection. This surprises us because we see no reason in them for doing this. We correctly argue from this fact to a first intelligent being, the effective cause that gives order to all these things. But this *a posteriori* argument can be completed by an *a priori* argument as follows.

It is impossible for us to investigate of all the entia that compose the world. Moreover, even the few that we do experience and can investigate cannot be known to such a full extent that we discover all the reasons for their parts, for their distribution, their connections and the ends to which all their different ways of operating tend. We cannot verify by experience whether all are ordered with perfect wisdom in all their elements, respects and acts. Nevertheless, if we can find some order and many

traces of intelligence and wisdom, this is sufficient for us to argue that the first cause must be intelligent and wise. Having found this cause, we start from it with a new argument, this time *a priori*. We investigate what this cause must be, and our reasoning shows that it must be a pure, subsistent intellect. With our mind now enriched by this great truth, we immediately argue that even when we cannot verify an order *a posteriori*, either because we are dealing with entia that escape our experience, or because our power of understanding is limited, there must nevertheless be order, perfect order. We argue that everything in the world must in all respects be totally ordered and made with perfect wisdom. The ancients called this very solid way of arguing *regress* (cf. *Logica*, 701–709).

## CHAPTER 5

**The teaching about cause considered in all its universality  
can be deduced as a corollary from the nature of the first  
cause**

### Article 1

Universal teachings can be obtained in two ways:  
ideologically, through the analysis of ideas, and ontologically,  
through theosophical abstraction

1357. We have seen that the First Cause, the cause of all second causes, is an Intellect. From this we can induce the properties common to all causes.

All teaching about universals is arrived at by human thought in two ways.

*First way.* Our thought can, by normal abstraction, form for itself the idea of a thing and thus know what the thing teaches us. With this idea we can carefully examine the essence contained in it and presented to the intuition of our mind. We can analyse this essence and discover its elements and the bond that unites the elements. We can thus form a teaching about the essence and its properties, and this teaching is universal precisely because every essence contained in an idea is universal.

*Second way.* Our thought can ascend first of all to absolute Being. When it knows the nature of this Being, which contains eminently all essences united together, it can consider how the essence whose teaching it seeks may exist in this Being, and then how this essence can be shared by or divided from everything else that is thought in absolute Being. Thus, by means of a theosophical abstraction, it can induce the properties of the essence from the properties that the essence has in its first source.

Both ways lead human thought to the acquisition of cognitions that are certain because ideology has the principle of self-evidence, although it does not give the ontological solution

to the difficulties raised against the ideological solution. Nevertheless it remains unshaken through self-evidence or direct demonstration. Moreover, ontology extends into ideology, from which it takes the self-evident principle of truth and certainty, that is, the criterion, and adds to the ideological demonstration the solution to the difficulties that had proved insoluble.

The ontological procedure, when not divided from the ideological which it presupposes, is further enriched not only because it provides the solution to all the difficulties involved in the ideological solutions but above all because it is a new element that forms part of the teaching: the *essence* whose teaching is sought is no longer considered in isolation but in the emanation from its principle. As long as it is considered in isolation, it is an undetermined, empty and, as it were, dead essence, but considered in its principle, it is seen as determined, full of reality, and alive. Some of these properties that it possesses in its origin but are lacking in the abstract idea are communicated to it when relative entia share in it. Consequently, although these entia can return the properties to the idea, the properties remain inexplicable and, as it were, added additionally to its abstract essence, because strictly speaking its explanation does not lie in this abstract essence but in the emanation of this essence from the first Cause and nature. For example, the abstract idea of cause contains no other concept than that of an entity that produces another entity. But if we are to understand that no entity can produce another unless the first is an intellectual ens, we need to consider cause not abstractly but in its real efficiency, which reduces to the first cause.

## Article 2

Cause, in its proper sense, is always intellectual and therefore free

1358. As we have seen, the First Cause of all causes is an intellect. Every entity that is first in its order is perfect and absolute because when the entity subsequently presents itself to the

mind, it has by this very fact received some limitation. If however no limitation whatsoever was attached to it, not even by relationship, it would not be a subsequent concept but still the first, perfect entity.

Thus, to know the *essence* of the entity in all its fullness, it must be considered in its first, absolute being.

Hence, to know what is absolutely required by the essence of Cause we must consider what the First Cause is, prior to all restriction and limitation. It is in fact the essential cause, not an abstract and therefore undetermined cause but complete and subsistent. As a result we find in it the following three properties:

1. It is an Intellect, which has the capability to multiply its objects.

2. It is an Intellect which is a subject free in its action, that is, operates freely, because it has the nature of cause in so far as it produces others different from itself.

3. It is a perfect Intellect which as such has the capability to give subjective, relative being to its objects, which are something other and different from itself, that is, to create them.

This is Cause in its complete and subsistent essence.

1359. What process then do we follow if by theosophical abstraction we wish to derive idea, that is, abstract essence, from the First Cause?

The process can be inferred from what has been said in the previous Book. In fact, theosophical abstraction, relative to the teaching about cause, tends to distinguish between what is exclusively proper to the First Cause and what is common to other causes. To make this separation our thought needs to see what is communicable and what is incommunicable: everything in being and communicable to finite entia must be considered as something entering into the idea of such entia; anything totally incommunicable must be restricted solely to first, abstract being. I have already shown that the principle of incommunicability is *unlimitedness*. Consequently, everything conceivable by the understanding as limitable and limited can be communicable, but nothing of what can be conceived solely as unlimited.

If we put the First cause before our mind and in so far as it is

object of the mind we remove unlimitedness from it, we are left with the concept of *limited cause* and all that this concept must have. But the first and essential Cause is an Intellect. If therefore we limit this Intellect in so far as it is an object of our mind, we are left with a limited Intellect. This is the true, complete and common notion of cause, deduced by theosophical abstraction. It is therefore essential to cause to be intellective because this property is found in the essential, subsistent Cause and is a communicable property. Hence, if causes exist that are such through participation, these also must be intellective in order to be true causes.

Although Leibniz did not know how to philosophise by theosophical abstraction, he used the other way of common analysis and in doing so, concluded that 'every action had to be intellective' and 'a perception' (as he improperly calls the action). Consequently every force had to be a perceptive capability. But he was unable to profit by this enlightened principle because he could not find a way to explain the reciprocal action of simple substances and was prevented in doing this by the materialist prejudice that 'it was impossible for a simple substance to receive the action of another substance'. Hence, in the Leibnizian teaching there were *principles* but not *causes* in created nature. Malebranche went further because he denied even *active principles* in finite entia. The only principle and cause of all natural events that he accepted was God alone — *occasional causes* were causes only in a metaphorical sense. He was not aware that this opinion destroyed not only human freedom but nature itself. Nevertheless, these and many other philosophers show they certainly understood that the concept of intelligence is necessarily involved in the concept of cause.

1360. If every cause is intellective, cause must also be a freely operating subject.

An intellect in fact operates in two ways: either it does an action with which it posits itself in its natural act, or it does an action which has objects different from itself as already posited and constituted in its natural act. Relative to the first of these two actions, the intellect is properly speaking a *subjective principle* and in no sense a *cause*. With the second action, the intellect is a cause because, as I have defined it, cause is 'the actuality

where we conceive a subject fully constituted in its own nature before we think of it as giving existence to some other entity, and to this actuality we subsequently attribute the power or act which originates another entity different from the act'. Thus, if an intelligent subject thinks entities different from itself, the things it thinks are not necessary to it for its subsistence and nature; they are other and, as we say, outside it. Because these entities are not necessary for constituting the thinking subject, they can be thought or not thought, without anything lacking to the subject thinking them and existing prior to and independently of them. The subject is therefore free to think or not think them. Hence, there is a species of freedom that is essential to the concept of cause and it consists in this: 'The effect is not necessary for constituting the cause as subject in its own nature, that is, the subject does not depend on its effect.'<sup>132</sup>

The First and absolute Intellect would not be fully constituted one and trine in its nature if it did not know itself and, knowing itself, generated its Word and, loving itself in this Word, breathed the Holy Spirit. This is why the Father is called principle, not Cause, of the Trinity. But the concept of the creative act of the world comes later and supposes the creating Intellect already fully constituted in its nature. This Intellect is not therefore obliged to create in order to constitute itself in its own nature. In this sense, it freely creates and has the nature of Cause.

1361. If we carefully consider the nature of this freedom of the creative act, we discover another of its properties. The nature of the subject is constituted before the subject is conceived as cause. Therefore, the fully constituted nature does not contain the physical, that is, real reason which really or physically determines the subject to operate as cause. In its real nature the subject has only the *power to create*, and there is no physical or real force either inside or outside it to move it

<sup>132</sup> Baldinotti considers freedom essential to the true concept of action and cause, and he takes this principle even further than I do. Ignoring this difference here, I will use his authority to confirm where we agree. He writes: 'These things show that action cannot be separated from freedom, and that necessary action is truly not action. This is not to be understood absolutely, but as freedom from constraint, that is, immune from external constraint, indeed from necessity, which external force applies.'\*



physically to its act. In order that this power to create which is essentially in the divine nature should emerge into act, the intellectual subject must stimulate itself, as it were, and move itself to operate, and operate through a moral reason which, precisely because moral, has no real force to move what is real. The creating subject is moved by itself to act without any other real cause, because the only reason it has is in its moral form, and the reason is the love the subject has for itself; it is not the love that is the perfecting term of its nature by which it posits itself as subsistent Beloved, but the love it has for itself as the end of finite entia. The subject therefore, which already is as subsistent Beloved, sees that it can be loved also by finite entia, and moves itself to create them in order to be loved by them. They themselves do not move the creating subject to create because they not yet are. Nor does their possibility move the subject, because their possibility is itself subsequent to the creative act, and also is not a physical force but a simple light that allows knowledge to be had without applying physical force. The subject is moved by the knowledge of being able to be loved by finite entia. However, as long as this remains a mere mental *possibility*, it does not have, as I said, any active force, but only knowable force (AMS, 606–611). Clearly therefore the only real subject which has this possibility, as a reason and as an end to be obtained, is the subject that can move its own power to its act. This self-movement without other cause is the spontaneous movement of a *free*, primal spontaneity, by which the subject makes itself, and by itself, a real cause in act. The property of divine freedom in creating could therefore appropriately be called *primal spontaneity* because no real moving agent precedes it but only an ideal possibility, a purely logical precedence. This *primal spontaneity* must be fully distinguished from the *subsequent spontaneities* that prior to themselves have real moving agents and therefore cannot be attributed with the quality of *free* in the same sense.

It is true that the *power* to create the world was drawn to its *act* eternally by the divine subject and that consequently in God there was never knowledge of the world at the imperfect level of pure idea and mere possibility, nor was the power purely mere power without its act. But the perfect knowledge, that is, the verbal knowledge, does not remove the knowledge of what is

known in the idea; it perfects the idea. Nor does the act of the power remove the power but perfects it. We can therefore legitimately distinguish the concept that constitutes the ideal possibility of the world from the divine Word which produces the world in its own existence, considering the Word as eminently contained in the world; we can also distinguish the power from the creating act, in which it is also eminently contained. Consequently, God on the one hand is called *Omnipotent* and on the other, *absolute, most pure act*, not because these two things are separate in God, but because omnipotence is a concept virtually contained in the *absolute, most pure act*, from which mental analysis cannot divide it.<sup>133</sup>

1362. Someone may say that the actuality present in the creative act is a component of the divine essence. Hence, it seems that the act must be posited if the divine nature is to be fully constituted by the entic force. Therefore, the act is not free, as claimed.

Some of the premisses in this objection must be conceded but the last and the consequence must be denied. We must concede that the actuality of the creative act pertains to the divine essence and is distinguished in no way whatsoever from the essence. We must also concede that the actuality is a perfection, because everything in the essence of God is an act and perfection. But we cannot concede that this act is necessary for constituting the divine nature, and that it is not free. These two propositions which I deny destroy the two properties I distinguished in divine freedom. Regarding the first property, I defined the freedom of the creative act as 'that quality of the act

<sup>133</sup> St. Thomas says: 'Because the power of God is infinite, it is not determined more to one thing than another, — there must be something else therefore superior to the nature of power, something through which a task can be determined. Now, a task is performed through knowledge which knows the nature proper to the thing. But knowledge is of good and evil and therefore related to opposites. Hence, something else must be added in which the nature of cause is perfected, and it is the will, which determinedly accepts one thing out of the two it knows or is able to do. Thus, the perfect nature of causality in things that do not act by a necessity of nature is found first in the will, as the Philosopher says in Book 9 of the *Metaphysics*. This is appropriate to the will in so far as its object is an end'\* (*In I Sent.*, D. 45, q. 1, art. 3. Cf. *S.T.*, I, q. 19).

which does not make the act necessary for constituting the divine nature in its unity and in the trinity of the persons in which the act subsists'. Regarding the second property, I defined the same freedom as 'that primal spontaneity of the divine subject by which the subject, of itself, activates its operative power without any reality and impelling force moving the spontaneity to do this'.

In defence of this second property of the divine action *ad extra*, I say that the *primal spontaneity in act* can both pertain to the divine essence and simultaneously constitute a free act. These two propositions contain no contradiction; it is certainly not contradictory that an essence can exist of which a free act of primal spontaneity can become part. Indeed contradiction is here so remote that if this essence existed, the sole result would be that 'the freedom of this act would be essential', that is, the act could not even be thought to be, unless it were free. Saying therefore that the free act of creation pertains to the divine essence not only does not destroy the freedom of the act but firmly establishes it; in other words, 'the freedom of the act is so necessary that if it were not free, the essence in which it is present could no longer be thought'. The essence of God therefore requires the creative act to be free, that is, posited by a *primal spontaneity* of the creating subject.

Regarding the second property of the freedom of the creator-act, I have, it seems, made its defence more difficult by saying that 'the divine essence requires the creative act that is in the essence as a perfection, to be free'. If the freedom of the creator-act is in fact a perfection required by the divine essence, this essence is not perfect without the free act; consequently, the act is not posited by a subject that is already perfect; on the contrary the subject posits the act in order to constitute itself in a perfect mode. Moreover, if the act is also necessary for the perfection of the subject positing it, the act is not free in the sense of the first definition of its freedom. But again this is a sophism which can be solved as follows.

The divine essence requires the divine subject to carry out freely and with primal spontaneity the act of creation.

But the subject could not move itself with primal spontaneity if it did not exist as a perfect subject, as an infinite Ens.

Therefore the divine essence requires that the creative act be

logically posterior to the perfect constitution of the subject and the infinite Ens — which was to be proved.

1363. A distinction must therefore be made between an *act* and the *mode* of the act. I said that what is free and what is spontaneous are not acts but *modes* of acts in which acts are produced. Hence, divine essence must simultaneously require the following two things, which are not contradictory: 1. the *creative act* be posited, and 2. this act be posited in a free *mode*, that is, with primal spontaneity. This spontaneity does not have, prior to itself, a cause or mover; it is a property of free will, which chooses to act rather than not act. But because this spontaneous choice is made from eternity, it involves no change in God. For this reason St. Thomas denies the predicate 'contingent' relative to God; for him, the concept of contingency includes the concept of mutability. Because the divine act is eternal and immutable, it is not conceived solely as a mere potentiality which existed prior to the act. Just as we can argue from *esse* to *posse*, so in the creative act the power to create can be found by abstraction. And as the act is determined *ad unum* [to one], so the power is undetermined *ad utrumque* [to both]. This in fact is the way the mind conceives the determined: it abstracts from its determinations and is left with the concept of the undetermined. This arises from the necessary relationships between the mind and the *subsistent*. Although the subsistent is totally simple, the mind breaks it down not *in se* but as a pure object of the mind. This dismantling is not false because a concept can be truly dismantled and reconstituted in this way. But falsehood would enter when the mind attributed to the subsistent what is true solely of the mind's concept, that is, of its pure object relative to the subsistent. As I said, this dismantling by the mind of what is one simple thing pertains to the faculty I have allotted to the intellect, of *multiplying* its objects.

Consequently, although the creative act can be carried out solely from eternity, and there has never been a time when it could not be carried out because it has always been carried out, nevertheless abstraction allows us to think it contains a *power* either to carry out or not carry out the act. This is a true thought, just as it would be a false thought to think that the power had existed for a time in God without the act. But the act

does not remove the power, just as the greater does not remove the less. If therefore the act of free choice exists, much more does the power of God exist, not in isolation but determined to the act by the will. Thus, God as creating is conceived with this order, that is, 'an undetermined power willingly determined'. These two things in God are one totally simple thing, which however is divisible by the human mind that thinks the thing in those two mental essences.

1364. I said that the first of these two mental essences, the creative *power*, is part of the concept of God as fully constituted, and that the second, the *act*, exceeds this concept precisely because it is naturally free, not necessary, and is such that it presupposes the subject that, fully constituted, does the act relative to itself. If careful attention is paid to what I have said and meant here, all other difficulties, even those that still remain after what has been said, will disappear.

When I say that the power to operate is part of the perfect constitution of absolute Being but the creative act is not, I am comparing the two concepts of power and act with the concept of the perfect constitution of God, in which one is included but not the other. The whole question depends therefore on a clear explanation of what is meant by 'the perfect constitution of God'. God is Being devoid of all limitation. His perfect constitution therefore consists in this: infinite Being must be thought as actuated. Hence, everything that is not infinite being does not pertain to the perfect constitution of this Being. As a result, finite entia, because they are not infinite Being, do not pertain to what forms its perfect constitution. Furthermore, infinite Being could not be without the power to create finite ens because this power is included in the concept of an infinite Intellect, just as the concept of an infinite Intellect is included in the concept of infinite Being. Hence, the concept of creative power is contained in the concept of the perfect constitution of infinite Being. But *creative power* is the concept of an undetermined power, determinable solely by the will of the subject possessing it. Therefore a free act is necessary to produce it. But a freely willed act is a concept posterior to the concept of the subject that wills and is fully constituted. Consequently, the creative act does not enter into the concept of God fully constituted in himself.

1364a. But here also there is a distinction of mental concepts to which a oneness without any distinction corresponds in the subsistent thing. In fact, the mind distinguishes between 'the nature of God' and 'what follows from this nature but is not the nature'. The concept of 'the nature of an ens' differs from and is antecedent to the concept of 'the operations of that nature'. The operations are conceived posteriorly to the nature that operates, as a consequence of the nature. Hence, although in God nature and operation subsist as one subsistence, this one, simple subsistent thing, conceived by the mind, as pure object of the mind, is composed of two concepts. Because these two concepts are truly distinct in the mind, and the subsistent thing has a different relationship to each of them, each of the concepts has, in the subsistent thing a different entity corresponding to each of them.

These two entities however are not two in the subsistent thing absolutely understood *in se*, but in its relationship to the mind, as pure object of the mind: the duality does not exist in the subsistent thing itself but as it is present to the mind. Consequently, two different entities are distinguished in divine Being considered relative to the mind thinking it and purely as object of the mind. One is called the *nature* of Being, the other, the creative *operation* posterior to and following from this nature. That which in divine Being corresponds to the *concept* of nature differs from and is antecedent to what in the same divine Being corresponds to the concept of *creative operation*. Thus, one concept does not make known the same as the other concept. But if divine Being is thought without this relationship to these concepts of the mind, we no longer find the duality that results solely from the relationship between the same identical Being and the two mental concepts. It is totally acceptable therefore that in divine Being, subsistent in itself, the entity corresponding to the concept of *divine nature* and the entity corresponding to the concept of *creative operation* form one and the same most simple act — in the concepts they are two but in the subsistent thing they are fused into one.

1364b. The objection may again be raised that the creative *operation* is a *perfection* and therefore cannot be lacking to the divine essence, because, if it were, the divine essence would lack some perfection, which is contrary to the concept of God.

I reply: just as the *divine nature* is distinguished in concept from the *creative operation*, so the perfection in the divine nature is distinguished in concept or by mental relationship from the perfection in the creative operation, although in the subsistent thing these two perfections form one. The nature and its perfection are absolutely necessary, and in exactly the same way the operation and the perfection constituted by the operation are absolute free. Hence, the *perfection which the divine nature is* and the perfection consequent upon this nature, which I call *perfection of superabundance*, are two distinct concepts.

In God therefore there is a perfection that consists in a naturally necessary act by which he is constituted and a perfection of superabundance that consists in a free creative act of primal spontaneity, and both these perfections are identical. This does not mean therefore that the free creative act loses its characteristic of free act; all we can infer is that God is not only supreme by nature but supreme through an act of free will. Through this act he wishes to communicate himself as the end of finite entia, but is not moved to this by the nature of finite entia, nor determined to it by his own natural, necessary constitution. This act of free will, present in his nature as a power, moves itself to create, and there is no other cause outside it. Such a will is the love that God has for himself and, naturally willing himself, he freely wills to be loved by others.

1365. If such is the First Cause, and if we have the concept of Cause in all its universality that contains everything in the First Cause except its unlimitedness, the following can be deduced from what has been said. The concept of *cause* in all its universality presents itself to the mind in two forms: as *cause in potency* and *cause in act*. If we join this result to the result we already have, the notion of cause requires 1. that it be intelligence, 2. that it be free will, and as such, *power*, and 3. that this free will have an *ideal end* or pure object. This ideal end, precisely because ideal, does not yet exist *in se*. Hence, it has no force with which it can determine and move the will by acting on it physically, that is, really. On the contrary, the will determines itself to the acquisition of the end it spontaneously loves, and by means of this spontaneous determination the intelligent and willing cause activates itself.

1366. But here we come up against the metaphysical question of free will. It seems in fact that cause, that is, free will, passes from potency to act without 'a sufficient reason'. If the will is disposed equally to either of two actions, to operate or not operate, how can it choose one action in preference to another? What cause removes this equilibrium — the cause must surely differ from the will itself, which of its nature is indifferent?

In reply I say that the will is indeed a power, the power to choose (*AMS*, 636–643): if it performs an act, by this very fact it makes a choice. And if we ask what moves it to choose, the answer is that it always has a tendency to choose because by its very essence it is an act of love; it is therefore always in act towards good. Consequently, it is sufficient that good present itself for the will to choose it, that is, for it to prefer good to its opposite (*AMS*, 624–627). It performs a new act when a new good is presented to it, and if it is presented with many goods that compete with each other, it chooses the greatest. But what if the goods are such that they cannot be compared because their difference is a difference of category, not of quantity? For example, a good that is relative to an individual who is making a choice would be subjective, whereas an absolute good considered in itself would be objective. Nevertheless the will must still make a choice, and the choice will not depend on comparing only the quantity of these two goods but on comparing their categorical forms, which have nothing in common. The will cannot but choose, because it is actuated to this by nature; it must perform an act that comes totally from its power to choose, which pertains to the freedom I called *bilateral* (*AMS*, 564–566; 606–611). This bilateral freedom, however, as an element of merit, is not present in God. In God, subjective good cannot in any way clash with objective good because the object is the subject generated as subsistent object. Consequently, the only good of the subject is the absolute, objective and infinitely loved good.

A free and willed cause therefore never passes to its act without a *sufficient reason*. This sufficient reason which determines it to its act is composed of two parts: a) the fundamental act of the will, that is, a continual tendency to choose good, and b) the *ideal end* which shows it the good that does not yet exist but to



which it can give existence. If the second part is missing, the will remains a *cause in potency*. But because this second part could not determine the will without the first part, the will is *free*: it determines itself by itself, by its own weight so to speak. Thus, the sufficient reason for its determination is accomplished and at the same time it becomes an *act-cause*.

When all this *sufficient reason* is present, the cause is called *full*, and it cannot lack either its *act* or *effect*. In other cases it is called *non-full*, and remains in a state of potency, without a second act and effect.

1367. Let us now look at the third property of the First Cause. According to this property the First Cause is an Intellect that, as such, has the capability to give relative, subjective being to its ideal objects, that is,<sup>134</sup> create them. Clearly, this property is incommunicable to finite entia, which *are* not, but *have* being, precisely because being is not a limitable property. Surely the only ens of which we could say that the intellective acts were being, is the ens that is itself being? The first two properties on the other hand were limitable and therefore communicable, because 'everything in whose concept unlimitedness is not understood is limitable'. And unlimitedness is not understood either in the concept of intellect, which is the first property, or in the concept of free will, which is the second property. However, it is understood in the concept of a power that by thought can give being to another, because such an intellect that gives *being* to another must itself be being, and being is by its nature unlimited.

Hence, in the universal, common concept of cause, the effect must be expressed in a more common way, so that it includes both being and the forms, particularly the real form which is the subject of limitations. This more common notion will therefore be that of thing or entity. Thus, we can say that 'cause in general has, as a property, the capability to produce something or an entity conceived ideally and different from itself.'

1368. Summarising the three properties of cause, the

<sup>134</sup> I said that for God objects are real acts, but these real acts, considered purely in their actuation of types, are fittingly called *ideal objects* through a theosophical abstraction.

following three properties can be said to be understood in the perfect notion of cause in all its universality:

1. Cause is an intellectual subject.
2. It operates freely, that is, it is not necessitated and determined to operate in a particular way by a physical, that is, real agent.
3. It has the capability to produce an entity different from itself.

To avoid confusion of these concepts, I will add an observation about the difference between the concepts of *cause* and *power*. The two definitions I have given must be compared. They are:

‘Power is a *cause* which is the subject of its own effect.’

‘Cause is an entity which produces another entity different from itself which is called *effect*.’

In the first definition, *cause* is a *genus*, *power* a species of cause; and the same extensive sense is given to ‘effect’. Thus, cause is understood in a most general sense, and includes (as if they were its species) principles, powers, and causes in a strict sense; in a word ‘it is everything from which any entity whatsoever can proceed’.

In the second definition cause is understood in a strict, proper sense.

If in the definition of power we want to avoid the word ‘cause’, precisely because its sense is too undetermined, power can be defined as follows:

‘Power is a subjective entity that of itself has the capability to produce another entity of which the producing power is the subject.’

This definition, applied to *cause*, tells us that every cause is a *power* relative to its acts, of which it is the subject. It is called *cause* only in relationship to the *effects*, that is, to the entities produced by it and different from it, of which it is not the subject.

Article 3

Cause in itself is one, but trine in its modes, called 'efficient', 'exemplar' and 'final'

1369. The First Cause is Being, and Being is Intellect in act, that is, perfect Intellection. Perfect, subsistent Intellection implies a Trinity of persons, who correspond to three forms of Being, that is, the subjective form, the objective form and the loving or moral form.

In its subjective form, Being gives us the efficient Cause; it is a subjective real that produces a subjective real. In its objective form Being gives us the Exemplar Cause, that is, it is typical or order-giving, from which comes the order in the things of the world. Finally, Being in its loving form gives us the final Cause.

These are commonly understood as three supreme genera of causes; thus, causes are classified according to category. They are in fact the three modes or forms of one, sole cause.

If we take the definition, 'Cause is an entity which produces another entity different from itself. It is not the subject of this entity but such that it is conceived as a subject in whose concept the entity produced is not included', we see that an intellect cannot produce an entity different from itself except on three conditions: 1. it must have an efficient capability, 2 it must have knowledge, because it produces the effect through knowledge, and 3. it must be stimulated to produce the effect by a final reason which it wills and is called 'end'. Hence, an intellect, operating as cause according to the definition, has essentially *in se* this law: it must operate and produce with *one sole operation*, but the operation has contemporaneously *three modes*. The one, simple operation comes from the unity and simplicity of the operating intellect, which in God is the divine essence, and the trinity of modes comes from the trinity of the supreme forms of being, which in God is a trinity of persons.

Because the first cause is purely being, and being is one and trine, so the first cause is one and trine. Thus, when the philosophers before me and I myself distinguished the three causes as efficient, exemplar and final, they simply divided by abstraction the contemporaneous modes of operation of the one cause, calling each 'cause' separately from the other two. Consequently,

to be cause of the world pertains properly speaking to the divine essence common to the three persons, but from these persons proceeds the trine mode in which the divine essence operates.

1369a. We can also see this when we consider the effect of the whole of creation. All things in creation show the need for a trine cause or triple reason for the manner of their existence; everything demonstrates in its cause the need 1. for a real efficiency which can explain its real subsistence, 2. for a wisdom that can explain its wonderful order, and 3. for an end that can explain how everything is subordinated to the good of intelligent creatures. At the same time, however, we clearly see that none of these three reasons or causes would have been sufficient if it had operated separately from the others. Any efficiency whatsoever, separated from wisdom and therefore lacking type or exemplar, would have produced solely matter without form, which is a mental entity that cannot subsist *in se*. On the other hand, a wisdom or exemplar lacking efficiency could not make finite entia subsist *in se*. Finally, an end cannot exist without an intelligent subject that proposes the end to itself. Hence finality alone would have produced nothing at all; it would not have existed. The three reasons or causes therefore had to be united in a single operation, otherwise they could not have been the cause of the world. Thus the world clearly manifests in itself traces of both the unity and trinity of the cause that produced it; it shows that it can be an effect only of a principle that is simultaneously one and trine, and of one sole operation that is triple in its mode. The mind therefore, obliged to explain the world as an effect, finds in the world the manifest traces of the unity and trinity of God, and ascends *a posteriori* to the concept of a cause simultaneously one and trine.

From this we can also show *a posteriori* that a perfect cause cannot exist if it is not simultaneously efficient, typical and final; in other words, it is subjective, objective and loving or moral. We also see that to say there are three causes is incorrect; they are only three modes with which the one cause operates at one and the same time. But this one cause is not a fourth thing, for without its three modes it is not a cause, and cannot be conceived as existing.

1370. We can still ask however whether this abstraction that reveals three causes is purely an arbitrary abstraction carried

out by the human mind, or is founded on a true separation existing between them.

We must answer the question in this way. The three causes are extracted either by theosophical abstraction, that is, exercised on the concept of God, or by common abstraction, that is, exercised on the entia we perceive in the world. In the theosophical abstraction exercised on such a cause the three modes of operation are neither divided nor distinguished in any way from the cause; their true distinction is solely between themselves. Hence, the three abstract causes are simply pure, hypothetical abstractions. On the other hand, common abstraction exercised on the entia of the world finds the effects of the three modes of operation of the first cause certainly united but distinct by nature, so that we can accept three different causes in the first step of abstraction; only subsequently, by means of philosophical reflection on them, do we conclude that they are not, as they seem, three causes, but must be three modes of operation of only one cause. This seems to explain why the ancients, who drew their ontology from consideration of the world, distinguished the three causes as if each were separately a cause, and what I have said bears this out: I noted that the object of the human mind is a nature distinct *in se* from the mind, whereas the nature of the mind is purely subjective and such that the object can never be confused with it but must maintain a constant opposition. The real, that is, the mind, is truly distinct in nature from the idea that is object. Just as the real is the vestige of the subjective or efficient cause, the object is the vestige of the objective or exemplar cause. The effects are therefore distinct in nature, with the result that the first movement of thought leads to the supposition of two distinct causes. This explains the error of the Platonists as well of all those who eventually accepted an exemplar cause subsisting on its own as a nature truly distinct from the efficient cause. As we saw, this is also what Fr. Parchetti finally did: he maintained that eternal possible things existed outside God.

1370a. The same can be said about the final cause. Because all creatures are finite, they do not have their own good in themselves. They therefore seek it outside themselves, tending to their own completion either by uniting with other creatures, a union which for them has the nature of good, or ultimately

uniting with the supreme good, where they truly find their own end. Hence, the end of creatures (particularly intelligent creatures) lies in something outside them, to which they have a certain appropriateness, and by uniting themselves to this thing feel they extend their limits and complete themselves. Thus, because they posit and find their end in other entia, they endow these with the nature of end or final cause. They then divide this final cause from both the efficient, subjective cause which is in the entia, and the objective cause with which they can only know the final good they propose for themselves, even though this good is not in the ideal object of their intellect. Thus, in the world considered as effect, we see in diverse natures vestiges of the trinity of cause. At first this suggests three causes rather than one sole cause operating in three modes. Add to this the fact that we commonly conceive brute forces which seem to operate purely as a subjective cause, so that we conceive this cause as if it were separate from the other causes. Furthermore, after gathering much information, we consider this information to be the cause of our knowledge, just as we consider objects dear to us as the cause of our happiness. It seems to us therefore that there are three causes that are separate or certainly distinct from each other. But all these are effects of the first cause, which does not admit these separations that we see or seem to see present in its effect which the finite ens is. The first cause is one and most simple, although the modes of its one, creative operation are three.

#### Article 4

#### The origin of entic force

1371. If we consider God in his internal constitution, we find that we can distinguish an intellective principle or act in the subsistent intellection that is his nature. This principle or act is continuously borne into himself as subsistent object and loved in such a way that, as loved, it is still his subsistent self. Here the act of intellection is eternally accomplished and eternally rests as in its end. But this act, which is a principle and a first and second term, has never had a beginning; it is *per se* eternal. We cannot say therefore that it is *in se* a cause, whether efficient or

exemplar or final, according to the definition, 'an entity which produces another entity different from itself', which I have given. The two terms are not productions different from the principle but are in the principle as an actuality through which the principle is a perfect subject subsistent *in se*, although the terms also are *in se*. Consequently, the operative principle can be conceived as a subject complete *in se* solely because it has already *in se* its two terms, as actualities, although *in se* they are also distinct from it like other subsistent things. Moreover, because the second term (*loved being*) does not have the nature of principle, much less can it have the nature of cause compared to both the first term and the principle. Again, the first term, compared to the principle, has the nature of that which issues from the principle, and relative to the second term it also has, together with its principle, the nature of principle. Hence, to find the nature of cause in God we must, as I said, consider it relative to the finite ens he has created.

Although the concept of cause and consequently the concept of final cause are not found in the internal, active constitution of God through which Being subsists in three personal modes, we must keep in mind the *action* which is continuously in God, in absolute being, an action that is perfect from eternity. By theological abstraction we can extract the concept of an immanent, permanent *action* that never ceases and needs no development because it is always complete.

If we consider the *vigour* of this action, we find no measure applicable to it, and we have the concept of *absolute* and therefore *infinite vigour*.

1372. This *absolute action* is being, totally free from limitations. But if we consider being as given us by intuition, which relative to its terms I called *initial being*, we conceive *initial being* as the beginning of action.<sup>135</sup> According to this way of human mental conception, certain inexact expressions arise which nevertheless aid our mind: for example, we can say 'being posits itself, continuously makes itself, continuously constitutes itself.' In these expressions the subject 'being' is not a true,

<sup>135</sup> What I call 'beginning' is the first of the seven meanings of ἀρχή distinguished by Aristotle (*Metaph.*, 5: 1): "beginning" means that part of a thing from which one may first move, etc.\*

subject but a dialectical subject that we can conceive and, as it were, are obliged to conceive, because *being*, as known by us through the first intuition, lacks its terms, and without these it is not a complete subject. We think that in the *being* that presents itself to us without a term, these terms lie deep as in an infinite virtuality. Our thought, therefore, when forced to pass from the concept of ideal being to subsistent being, is obliged to conceive that being's hidden terms emerge from deep within it. Hence we think being without the terms in the action of its emitting its terms of itself, something like those insects we see curled-up in a ball: our eye discerns nothing more than a tiny ball, not the form of the little animal, and does not guess this form if it has not seen it before. But it recognises the insect when, as it uncurls, it reveals its tiny legs and other parts, and in its movement manifests the life that animates it.

However, in this way of conceiving the action through which being is, and in using the above expressions as a result, care must be taken not to confuse *virtual being* with the principle of the Trinity. Virtual being is considered dialectically as that which, unfolding and actuating itself, posits itself as complete being, whereas the principle of the Trinity, which is the first person, is not virtual being but personal being, totally complete and totally absolute. Consequently, as I have said, we cannot conceive this person as subsistent, not even logically, prior to the other two persons eternally proceeding from and totally proceeded from the first person. In so far as the other two are not *in se* but in the first person, they are, so to speak, a part of his own essential, totally perfect actuality.

This understood, it is fully possible for us to conceive being that posits and has eternally posited itself, and also to conceive as God this act that has never passed nor ceased and always is complete. Granted the reservations I indicated above, we can conceive absolute being as absolute action, and by means of the absolute vigour present in this action we can justly conceive the action as a *force* in act that is always directed to constituting itself in *complete ens*.

1373. I repeat, therefore, an ens is not something inert; it is a force or energy always in act (*PSY*, 2: 1015–1016). But we conceive the force in act as something situated between the subject that possesses it and the term to which the force, posited in act,



comes. Thus, we conceive it by abstracting it from the subject-principle and from the term it arrives at. Consequently, we conceive the force of being that of itself emits its terms and with these completes itself as an ens, as a force that posits and constitutes an ens. I call it *entic force* in so far as it constitutes the essence of the ens, but in so far as it is also [capable] of producing other entia, I call it *entific* from which comes *entification*, which I discussed in the previous book.

A *force* is therefore essential to an ens, and this force continuously tends to the following, as to its term:

1. to make an ens exist;
2. to make the ens exist complete and perfect, and hence
3. it continuously resists the destruction of the ens, which is a tendency contrary to that of the force;
4. it continuously resists the deterioration of the ens, which is also a contrary tendency.

These four tendencies of *entic force* can be considered as four laws arising from nature, from the concept of an ens. These ontological laws are of great use in knowledge.

1374. But this way of considering *entic force* involves, as we saw, dialectical entities, because the subject conceived as agent (initial or virtual being) is purely a dialectical subject, not subsistent but existing solely in the mind. Conceived thus, *entic force* explains the constitution of an ens as it is before our mind according to our mode of conceiving it, [rather] than the constitution of the ens *in se*.

To attain the constitution of an ens *in se*, our thought needs to rise to the ens which is pure ens, that is, without limitation. This, as we saw, is God.

When we have come to this ens, we find it always eternally constituted. However, we see in it a perfect subsistent subject, which is perfect subsistent precisely because it is an act [that] has always produced itself as a subsistent subject-object, and together with this subject-object, has always produced itself as a subsistent subject-loving term. The first person is person, that is, a perfect, subsistent subject, solely by title of having produced the other two; it cannot therefore be thought before the other two, whose production is the act that makes the first person subsistent and complete. This is what the pure ens is, stripped of limitations: it is essentially one and trine.

Although in this one and trine essential ens everything is connected and indivisible, abstraction conceives eternal intimate *action*, and in this eternal action conceives through another abstraction an eternal *force* or energy. This force is *entic*, that is, intrinsic and essential to the ens, which is simple, pure and without limitations. I conclude again therefore that the ens in its essential purity and simplicity is absolute force and absolute action. I call this intrinsic *force* and *action* 'entic', to distinguish it from every other force and action.

1375. However, because the concepts of *force* and *action* are abstracts such that they do not present to thought either a principle or a term, we can ask again where does this action come from and to where does it tend. Here we come up straightaway against the imperfection of our mentally conceiving. *Coming to* and *tending to* present to our mind the concept of succession, progress, movement, that is, something imperfect which tends to being perfect, according to Aristotle's opinion that 'movement is the act of what is imperfect'. We must totally remove all these concepts of imperfection from our thought, which is difficult to do because we are faced with this antinomy: 'How is it possible to do an act which has already been done?', *to be actually doing* and *to have been done* seems a contradiction.

This apparent contradiction, we should note, arises because we attend much more to *transient* acts than to *permanent acts*. Transient acts cannot at the same time be 'being done' and 'have been done'. To have been done means already to be passed, to be no more. Such acts do not last: while they are being done, they are, but when done, do not exist. 'Being done' and 'to have been done' differ *in se*, just as 'being' differs from 'non-being'; they cannot exist together. On the other hand, we do not say that acts that endure 'have been done' in the sense that they no longer exist, because here 'have been done' means they exist as completed. If 'have been done' is understood in this sense, then 'being done' does not contradict it; in fact it readily identifies with it. We can understand the identification of these two concepts when we conceive an act that is 'being done' not in succession and bit by bit but is being done totally at every assignable moment. If our thought finds the most simple act of 'being done' in every assignable moment, without succession of any kind, our thinking this act that is 'being done' must be absolutely the same

as thinking the act as already done, because at the very moment it is being done it is completely done. Thus, 'being done' and 'to have been done' are simply two different modes of conceiving the same identical act. These two different modes arise from our conceiving the same act in two different relationships. If we compare an *immanent act* with a transient act that is being done, we say that the activity seen in the latter is present in the former, which is an activity on the point of being done. If on the other hand we compare an immanent act with a transient act that has already been done, conceiving the latter at rest and finalised not *in se* as already happened but in its effect as still remaining, we say that in the immanent act there is also the state of rest and finality present in the transient act that is finished and, as it were, at rest in its effect. The two qualities ('being done' and 'to have been done') therefore, separate in the transient act, are united in the permanent act without the imperfection of succession and cessation that is present in the transient act.

When therefore we remove every imperfection from this immanent, totally perfect and most complete act, which is absolute Being, we can, through abstraction, still conceive in it a continuous, acting, vital force, and again by abstraction we can always search for the principle and term, even though these are contemporaneous. In the case of the *principle*, we must conceive the two relationships which originate solely from our analogical way of thinking about transient acts, that is, we must conceive the principle as *actually acting* and as that which has always *completely acted*. If we conceive it solely as acting, separating it by abstraction from the second concept of having acted, we have only an abstract *beginning* of the action of being, but this beginning is a *real beginning*, it is not ideal and virtual being. The term of this *real beginning* that co-extends with the action is the *one and trine ens*, which continuously posits itself. This *real beginning* is like the *abstract point* or *initial force* by which we conceive the beginning of a movement through space. The Ens presents itself to us also in this mode as an absolute energy, force or action that posits itself. This *real beginning* however is not the first person of the Trinity, but an abstract real beginning.

But if we further consider that this acting ens is not only acting but has always completely acted, we find that it is not an abstract real beginning but a *subsistent principle* which, having always

attained its first and second term, is together with them eternally a perfect and already constituted person, just as its two terms are also already constituted persons. The absolute Ens, thus considered, is still an infinite energy that not only continuously posits itself but has continuously and most completely posited itself through an act which, always being done, has always been done, with the perfect identity of 'being done' and 'has been done'.

1376. The human mind therefore thinks the principle of entic activity and actuality in three ways:

1. as an *ideal beginning*, undetermined being which of itself, before our mind, emanates its *terms* and thus posits itself as absolute ens existing in itself,
2. as *real beginning*, that is, beginning of the eternal action which posits and constitutes the absolute ens,
3. as a *subsistent principle* which has continuously posited its terms and continuously posited the absolute ens one and trine.

In this nature of intrinsic energy and action of the absolute Ens through which it is what it is, we find the theosophical origin of the four ontological laws. These laws are present in all entia and introduce into the essence of an ens the concept of a force that makes the ens exist, and tends to make it exist in its greatest possible completeness, and resists its destruction and deterioration.

Someone may ask how do we determine 'what is the greatest possible completeness and perfection of an ens'. I believe that it is determined by the quantity of force possessed by the ens itself, and the quantity of this entic force, which is infinite in God, is determined in finite things by the limiting will of God. Thus, the quantity of the tendency is equal to the quantity of the force. And the phrase, 'to tend to give ens the greatest possible perfection', means 'all the entic force, whatever its quantity, necessarily tends to this purpose'.

A second question may now follow: 'You have explained the way the infinite ens is constituted, and starting from the principle that it must be an infinite, subsistent intellection, which is the nature of being, you inferred the infinite energy from which the infinite ens one and trine results. But how can you demonstrate, at least *a priori*, that all finite entia consist also of a similar force and action[?]'

I answer the question by referring to a principle I established in the previous book, where we saw that 'being is communicable to its finite terms and communicates to these everything it is, except *unlimitedness* together with all the qualities arising from unlimitedness. These are excluded by the hypothesis that the terms are limited'. It follows from this principle that 'everything in the essential Ens must also be in every ens that is such through participation, but not this unlimitedness which determines the essential Ens and distinguishes it from every other ens'. *Entic force* is something in the first Ens, or essential Ens. It must therefore be proportionately also in finite entia, which are such through participation, provided that it is finite in them, just as they themselves are finite, and are entia through participation in this force.

Finally, this *entic force*, which constitutes every ens, including finite ens, is of supreme importance in science, because it constitutes the supreme principle which explains all the *actions* and *spontaneous movements* in entia, and explains the laws according to which life continuously moves and operates. I explained these laws in greater detail in *Laws of Animality*, vol. 3 of *Psychology*.

## Article 5

### Final cause, or cause that has the mode of end

1377. By abstraction we necessarily conceive every ens as one and trine, that is, as resulting from a principle or beginning, from an action and from a term, in other words: principle, middle, finish. If just one of these concepts is excluded, the ens no longer remains; all that can remain before the mind is a certain rudiment of ens.

I have distinguished between the concept of *principle* and the concept of *cause*. Here, we must distinguish between the concept of *term* and the concept of *end* in the sense of *final cause*.

All entia, in whatever mode we can conceive them, truly have a *term* of their entic action and of the action that follows from the entic action. This results from the analysis I have just made. But only intelligent beings can have an *end* in their operation in

the sense of *final cause*<sup>136</sup> or, as Joseph De Maistre prefers to call it, *intentional cause*.<sup>137</sup> If we consider solely the force and entic action of intelligent beings, we cannot say that they operate for an end as final cause; all we can say is that we distinguish a term of their force and action. In fact, because the *entic force* of intelligent beings primarily constitutes and posits its own self in being, it is not an operating subject that, through such action, exists prior to the constituted ens, and can propose an end for itself: if the ens does not exist, the subject that is 'the first element of ens' does not exist. The *entic force* is therefore thought in the ens already constituted by the force and not prior to the ens, and for this reason does not have the nature of cause, as I said. It has only the nature of principle, whether this principle is conceived as an abstract *beginning* of the total ens or as a *complete subject* that is in the ens and continuously producing the two divine terms that are united with it and are themselves also subjects that are perfect in the same identical nature.

1378. But here we must note an essential difference between the entic force of infinite ens and the entic force of finite entia. Because the former is infinite and operates with the whole of itself (to operate with the whole of itself is, as I said, a law of such a force), we cannot think that it exists without thinking at the same time that it has found all its term: to think that the infinite entic force existed even for a moment without having found all its term would be a contradiction; it would also be contrary to the hypothesis because the force would not be infinite. This demonstrates the necessary eternity of God. If the entic force, which posits and constitutes an ens and is the first conceivable force or energy of the ens, did not exist, it could not be produced. Either this entic force must exist from all eternity or there is no ens, none at all, nor can there be, and if there is

<sup>136</sup> The distinction between the concept of *term* and that of *end* as final cause has been used by the Scholastics. For example, Cajetan says: 'Being, in execution, is not an *end* but a *term* and *effect*, both final and efficient'\* (*In S.* 1, 5, 4). I take *end*, *term* and *effect* to be three different concepts. The end gives us the concept of a good that is conceived but not possessed; the intelligent being operates to obtain this good. The term is in the ens, where the spontaneous operation rests and permanently remains. The effect is what is produced externally by the ens itself as by an efficient cause.

<sup>137</sup> *Examen de la philosophie de Bacon*, c. 18, §1.

neither this force nor ens constituted by it, nor is there is anything which can produce ens. On the other hand, if there is this force, just as there is ens, the force cannot be limited because no sufficient reason could be found for its limitation. The only way it could be limited is by an antecedent cause limiting it, and this cause would have to be an ens with an entic force, but this force would have to be infinite if the absurdity of an endless series of limiting and limited causes is to be avoided. Even if such a series to infinity were granted, it would lack the first link from which the whole series would be seen suspended. If the intuited entic cause eternally is, then the infinite, complete ens, constituted by this cause, eternally is. In fact, the action of this force cannot remain inactive, not even for a instant, because 1. it is not a complete subject that can subsist by itself, 2. there would be no reason which determined it to act, and 3. infinite entic force must essentially be a complete act without any potency.

1379. *Infinite entic force* therefore has always and eternally found its infinite term, without any succession, and the term is infinite ens with all its perfection.

On the other hand, *finite entic force*, although also operating with all itself, is nevertheless *finite* and as a result posits a *finite ens* and *tends* to the *perfection* of this ens. It therefore has mostly two levels and kinds of limitation: one direct, the other indirect, the latter arising as a consequence of the first. At the first level, the limitation of the force makes it posit a finite ens; at the second level, the limitation prevents it from positing the *perfection* proper to the *finite ens* at the time it is positing the ens.

The entic force's limitation by which it posits only a finite ens is determined by the *substantial essence*, which itself is directly decreed by the will of the Creator.

The limitation by which the entic force posits a finite ens and also tends to produce the perfection proper to this ens without attaining the perfection with the same act with which it posits the ens is a result of the constitution of the ens, a result of the first limitation, determined by the substantial essence. A complete finite ens is composed of a principle and a term, with the entic force residing in the principle. In the constitution of such entia the term is not naturally identified with the principle, so that if the principle is a subjective spirit, the term is either an object or matter, neither of which has the nature of subjective

spirit. Furthermore, because the term does not have the same nature as the principle nor is identified with it, the term is not necessarily in the principle's power: it is given to it and removed, increased and reduced, and given with varying degree of control. In *Psychology* I explained the potentiality and *accidental acts* of finite ens by deducing them from this principle (*PSY*, 2: 840–841). Consequently, the term of the principle of a finite ens is greater and better in proportion to the means possessed by the *entic force* (residing in the principle) for displaying its activity in the term and thereby obtaining the natural perfection of the ens. The force always has this activity as such, but it cannot always display it because it is exercised on a term that it does not posit but which is given or not given it, or given in varying degree. This is inevitable because finite entia are all composed of many natures, in each of which an entic force is separately conceived. The single force that constitutes the composed ens and is its foundation results from these elementary entic forces that oppose each other and communicate their own terms. Hence, the foundation of every ens includes activity, passivity and receptivity (*PSY*, 2: 870–877, 934).

The entic force therefore in a finite ens always posits the ens, but not always its perfection. However, the force always *tends* to this perfection; it is, so to speak, always intent on and straining towards producing the perfection but it cannot take the step, it lacks the term that it itself does not produce. When however it is given the term and it bears itself into the term, it can posit and constitute the perfection of the ens: in whatever way the term is given to it, it posits the ens in the term, but if the term is given to it complete and perfect, in accord with its nature, it also posits the perfection of the ens.

1380. We see from this that the ontological explanation of the mode of operation called *spontaneity* is deduced from the nature of the entic force. This mode of operation is an act originating from a force that by its nature produces the act, and this force is grounded in the *entic force* contained in the universal concept of ens. Hence *spontaneity* is 'the mode of operation possessed by a force that is *per se* in act but prevented from asserting itself by an external cause, that is, by a lack or defect of the term which it does not or cannot provide for itself; it can only strive towards the act which, once the impediment is removed or the necessary



term has been given, immediately takes place of itself'. In short, 'spontaneity is the mode of operation of the principle of ens'; it is the opposite of *violent* operation, which arises not from the principle of ens but from another ens. Hence, it is not a case of simply operating but of experiencing.

Entic force therefore posits an ens either

1. by *producing* its term and consequently having the term under its total dominion, in which case it posits the term as perfect, as in the case of the absolute Ens, or

2. by *acting* and uniting itself with its term, in which case the term is given it, and its dominion over the term has the same limitation as the perfection of the way in which the term is given it. Hence it produces the ens with the perfection that corresponds to the perfection of the term given it.

In both cases, the action of the entic force is spontaneous, and its cause pre-exists in it, displayed in act or in an active potency called *tendency*. All the laws concerning the operation of material and animal entia depend on this ontological principle, that is, they are founded on the intimate nature of ens.

In all these spontaneous operations, therefore, a principle and a term is always found, but not an end, that is, not a final cause. The intellective act itself, as an act of entic force, that is, as positing and constituting an intellective ens, has this ens for a term, but it cannot propose to itself the *end* to constitute an intellective ens; it is in fact unable propose any end to itself because it is not yet an intelligent ens.

Intelligent ens therefore must be fully constituted by entic force, so that when constituted as a subject *per se*, it can propose to itself an *end* for its ulterior operations. Hence, the *end*, taken as final cause, is never the intelligent ens itself that puts before itself the end as such, that is, the end is not the constitution of the ens, but something different from the constitution of the intelligent ens which operates for an end.

There are two kinds of constituted intelligent entia: absolute ens, which is God, and relative entia, which finite persons are. We must investigate how God can propose an end for his operation and how finite intelligent entia can propose an end for themselves.

1381. In the case of God, the primary result from what we have said is that he cannot propose an end for himself except

when he operates externally. Relative to his internal action that constitutes him, he has a term but no final cause.

In the work of creation we must distinguish two things: created finite entia and the creative act.

*Finite, relative entia* clearly add no perfection to God, and their concept is posterior to the concept of God, who is absolute, infinite Ens and creates them. They could not be created if the Creator were not *in se* totally perfect. Hence, finite entia as such have no necessary reason, not even that of end.

In the case of the *creative act*, we cannot deny that this is, as I have said, a perfection of God, an actuality of God — ‘actuality’ is the same as saying ‘perfection’. But it is a perfection that follows from the divine nature and from the essential goodness of the divine nature. Hence, the book of the divine names says that God ‘as essentially good extends goodness to all entia’.<sup>138</sup> The world exists therefore because God is good, for from him as good comes the creative act which I therefore called an actuality in God that follows from his natural goodness. Here however attention must be paid to what I mean. When in God I distinguish between a *natural perfection* and a *perfection consequent* upon his nature, the only distinction I intend is logical; it is a distinction of concept relative to the way we conceive. Indeed, I have often said that precisely because all distinction must be removed from a totally perfect ens, the creative act (as theologians teach) is the very act of God’s essence. Nevertheless, by an abstraction, our mind can and must distinguish between the act which constitutes God in his absolute, infinite nature, and the act, the creative act, that follows from the constitution of the all-good God — we must also remember that his nature includes the divine processions through which he is posited one and trine, having in himself being, perfect in every way, without any need of a relative ens. But the distinction is made only on condition that, after the reflecting mind has distinguished the two acts (the concept of one is not the concept of the other) according to their different natures, it clearly understands that the realisation of the two acts, which are two solely because known with two concepts, is brought about by only one real

<sup>138</sup> ‘Because the Good, as essential Good, by Its being, extends Its Goodness to all entia’\* (c. 4).

act. This real act that corresponds to the two conceptual acts is the act of the divine essence and, because the essence is unique and one totally simple act, it results equally from the act posited by the divine nature and from the creative act that follows this nature and posits the world.

But the two conceptual acts, distinct in their concept, differ greatly from each other. Both are certainly an intellective act because, as we saw, God is subsistent, practical intellection, and could not be otherwise whether as positing himself through the processions or as creating. Nevertheless, the direct, practical understanding with which the divine subject posits and has continuously posited himself both object and beloved differs from the indirect, practical understanding which is the act with which God, who is already posited by means of himself, eternally understands relative ens existing *in se*.

The intellective act with which God posits himself subsistent object and subsistent beloved, is necessarily, spontaneously and directly done by God, as an act of infinite, entic force. Therefore he has no need to assume some final cause, that is, to propose an end.<sup>139</sup> The intellective act with which he posits and creates the world is done by him when he proposes an end that assumes a final cause, because the world is not necessary to his nature and is not any part of his nature. In fact, if the world with its relative existence is not part of his nature, how then does he will the world? How can this divine nature which needs nothing else and [has] total being and good together with all that is lovable in it, will anything else? How can it will purely relative ens that adds nothing to it?

1382. From this it is clear that the world, having *in se* a relative, separate existence or, as is usually said, outside God, cannot be willed for itself because only good can be willed — the will is the faculty of good, and the world has no good that can be desired by God. He must therefore not will the world for himself but for an *end* that he proposes for himself. It is here that final cause begins to appear.

<sup>139</sup> 'Good is said to be diffusive as an end, in the way that we say that the end moves the efficient cause. The Father, however, is not the principle of divinity in this way but rather as an efficient cause' (St. Thomas, *In D.* 34, q. 2, ad 4).

But if God does not will the world for the world, and must have another end if he is to will it, and if the only willable end for God is himself and there is no other ens except himself outside the world, that is, outside the universal totality of created things, then God, who cannot create the world except by willing it and solely for a good end, must create the world for himself and not for the world; he must posit himself as the end of the world, which we can rightly understand to be the teaching of the words: 'The Lord has made all things for himself.'<sup>140</sup>

Thus God becomes the *final cause* of creatures but not the *final cause* for himself — God has no cause of any kind whatsoever. However, he is good for himself and good for creatures, because he is essentially good itself and as such is the good also of creatures. Consequently, just as we distinguished the two concepts of *principle* and *cause*, and also the other two, *term* and *end*, which correspond to them, so we must distinguish *good as good*, which is always a term of the will but not an end, and *good as end*. God is good for himself as *term* but not as *end*. This term however, which is good, is good for creatures as their *end*. Aristotle, who did not grasp the difference between *term* and *end* or final cause, and also confused them due to the notion of *good* which they have in common, considers *good* and *final cause* as one single thing, and makes the generation of entia always tend to an end, as to a final cause. He thus falls into that system of universal appetite through which everything, including animals or purely feeling things, is generated through a final cause that moves them.<sup>141</sup> On the contrary, we must say that although

<sup>140</sup> Prov 16: 4†.

<sup>141</sup> 'The fourth (cause)... is the purpose or the good; because this is the end of every generative or motive process'\* (*Metaphysics*, 1: 3). — Cajetan asks: 'Whether good is formally the concept of end formally, carried out in act; in other words, does good exercise final causality.'\* (*In S.*, I, q. 5, art. 4); he answers affirmatively. But this is not correct. The concept of *good* is not sufficient to constitute the concept of *end*. The concept of *end* results from several elements: 1. a good, 2. an intellective ens that can desire this good, 3. and desire it not as a good proper to its nature, that is, as its natural term, but as something different from its nature, 4. the knowledge that the intellective ens has of the good, 5. the possibility of obtaining the good, and finally 6, the apprehension of this possibility, without which the intellective ens does not propose the good as an end of its activity. If just one of these six elements is missing, the notion of final cause is missing.

generation, like every natural and spontaneous movement, certainly has a *term* to which it tends, it does not have an *end*, which is solely in the mind of the Creator and the craftsman. Nor can we suppose that in speaking this way Aristotle wants to use a metaphor; in fact he attacks metaphor in philosophy and wrongly accuses Plato of it when using the word 'exemplar' (cf. *Aristotle* etc. [n. 25]) which he mistakenly declares a metaphor.

God could not, therefore, create the world as end of his creative act because, if the world were the end God has in view as acting, and the end always had the nature of good, the world would have been a good for God. In this case, God would have had, for his good, something outside himself and so would not have been totally perfect and sufficient to himself. If the *end* for which God created the world had to be in him, we need to see how this could be, and what could there be in God that had the nature of end relative to his creative operation.

1383. *Being*, without limitations, is a subsistent intellection, and this intellection-Being fully understands itself. This Being therefore, understanding its subsistent self, generates its subsistent self as object. In this object of its understanding it posits its total subsistent self, it gives its total intelligent self to its understood self. This is the eternal generation of the Word. It also fully loves its understood self, which is the third person, the subsistent term and consummation of the loving act. Because this is divine nature, it necessarily includes the concept of an eternal *giving* of itself through the two ways known by two words consecrated by use: 'generation' and 'spiration'. Hence, the act of the source principle of the divine Trinity is an act that always tends into another and into another, and has from eternity always attained and, of itself, emanated this other and other. But if these two others were outside the producing principle, the principle would have, by that act, sought a term outside itself and would thus have been imperfect and insufficient to itself. The two terms, therefore, having proceeded in this way from the principle, remain in the principle, but at the same time subsist in themselves through their own personal awareness through which one knows it has been generated, and the other that it has been spirated. The principle itself has the personal awareness of being a generating principle and, together with what it has generated, also a spirating principle. Thus, in so far

as the two emanated terms remain in the Principle which of itself produces or emanates them, they complete the person which is a Principle, and constitute its wisdom and goodness, essential to it and, as communicated, also to the other two persons. Consequently, in this constitution of the divine Trinity, in the operation of the principle, we can logically but not in reality distinguish two characteristics or conditions: 1. a giving of everything to others, and 2 a retaining of everything, that is, a putting of everything in act in itself, so that the divine *essence*, which is in the principle and is communicated, is put in act through the same act through which the divine persons, really distinct from each other, are put in act. The result is therefore that the principle's giving of its total self to its object and to the beloved object is the act by which the principle is constituted in its final and infinite perfection. The principle and its perfection are therefore constituted by the fact that the terms are something different from the principle. The principle would neither be, nor understand itself, nor be perfect, if it did not, of itself, produce the terms that as terms are different from it. On the other hand, the act of producing the terms is the principle itself, producing them in itself and as something different from itself.

1384. We see therefore that the nature of divinity is such that it posits its perfection by giving and producing, and its perfection is the same as its essence. If the actuality of the divine essence is its giving and producing when the essence is considered in the fountal Principle of the Trinity, the creative act itself which produces something other (the world) is an actuality and perfection of the divine nature. But there is a difference between the production of the two divine persons and the creation of the world: both the persons and the world are something different from the fountal Principle of the Trinity. The former remain in the Principle which communicates its total essence to them, but the world comes out of the Principle and of the divine essence communicated to the other two persons, and exists with an existence relative to itself, different from the one and trine existence of God. In so far as the world exists outside the divine essence through its relative existence, it cannot in any way be a perfection of God nor constitute any part whatsoever of the divine nature. However, we saw that the world has, besides its relative existence,

an absolute existence in God, that is, in the divine essence. This absolute existence is at once

1. An object of the practical intellection which God is, and as such Exemplar.

2. A pure object and not a subsistent person. As a pure object, it is an actuality of God, an actuality that is *per se* object, because divine objectivity in God is not, as in us, something different from the subjective act but is a mode proper to the subjective act.

3. This object-act is the creative act. Hence I said that the Exemplar has an active and creative role relative to the world because the Exemplar is living and operating as a creative act.

1385. If we compare the procession of the two divine hypostases from the fonsal Principle of the Trinity with the procession of the world, we find an analogy that demonstrates the constant law of divine action, a law rooted in the divine essence:

1. In the procession both of the persons and of the world we find the distinctive note of *giving* and producing *another*, in which consists the actuality of the divine essence in so far as it constitutes the first hypostasis.

2. In both kinds of procession, the *other* that is produced remains in the *Principle* from which it proceeds and, remaining in the Principle, constitutes the Principle perfect as Principle, makes it total act. But at the same time the produced *other* also subsists *in se*, as something other than the Principle that has produced it. This *otherness* does not in any way harm the Principle; on the contrary it is the necessary condition for the act and for its perfection that is present in the giving and producing.

So far we have been dealing with the analogy and common law that makes St. Paul call the divine Word, 'Firstborn of every creature',<sup>142</sup> because he is also principle or cause. We must now deal with the difference.

The difference is that the two hypostases, proceeded from the first hypostasis, receive in this procession the same divine nature as the Principle, but this is not the case for the world. Consequently, if the proceeded hypostases subsist *in se* as other hypostases, they do not exist *in se* as other essences or natures: they exist as one and the same nature and essence. Hence, they

<sup>142</sup> Col 1: 15†.

are the same Being as the Principle is that has produced them. Thus, the producing Principle and the two produced by the principle are one and the same Being. But in the same Being they are three, and in each of these three there is the same Being. This trinity of hypostatic modes is the perfection and actuation of the one and only Being. To exist as Being means absolute existence. As hypostases therefore they are three relatives, each having in itself the same absolute existence. In the same absolute existence they are relatives to each other, but not to another that is outside the absolute common essence and existence. Hence, in so far as the two hypostases proceeded from the first are in the first and constitute the first's actuality and perfection and, as hypostases, they are others, existing in themselves, they have the same essence, because the same essence is in the Father as in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. But nothing of this is found in the world. The world, as existing in itself, exists relatively, and as existing in God exists absolutely. As existing *in se*, it exists as a real form, and as existing in God, it exists as being. But [a] distinct *form*, separated by the mind from *being*, constitutes a nature different from the nature of being. Consequently, there is not the same *essence* in the world existing *in se* and existing in the Principle that produces it. Indeed, strictly speaking, the world is not its own *essence* and hence its essence is not the world itself; the world is simply the realisation of its own *essence*, which pertains to the world in God, because the *essence* of the world is *being* that is limited by the divine mind, and the world is not its own being.

1386. None of this helps to explain the end which God could have had in the creation of the world; it simply makes us more aware of the difficulty in establishing the end. If the world in its relative existence is not its own essence, its own being, which is in God, we must evidently infer that neither the world existing *in se* nor the world in its essence in God could be God's end in creation, and therefore God could not have had any reason or final cause for creating the world. In itself the world has no meaning at all for God as acting. How then, or why, will he be able to move himself to create it, to give it being, being which is in him and is a volitive actuality of his? Would we think a Craftsman wise who gives being to a work that does not contain a good that could be for him a worthy end? If we answer that



the being of the world in God is a good, the answer is not valid because this being of the world would be an act finishing in a thing without meaning, that is, the world, and hence we would be unable to understand how the world had meaning or how an act without meaning could be a perfection of God or willed by him. We must remember that the creating exemplar, which this act is, cannot be divided from the world, and that the exemplar has the same meaning as the world that is its term; in fact, the exemplar of a thing that has no meaning at all cannot have any merit, and an act which produces something without meaning is a useless act, and hence an act without meaning. How do we solve this difficulty?

We must say that because the world has no meaning at all in itself capable of making it an end of the divine operator, this operator himself must give the world an end or term outside the world, by which it receives the meaning it does not have *per se* in itself. If the world that has no value in itself can nevertheless receive meaning when it is ordered to an end or term outside it, then through this ordering the world can become something worthy to be an end for the divine operator. And the only end or term outside the world to which it can be ordered is God himself, because 1. outside the Universe there is only God, and 2. only God can have an absolute meaning that is worthy to be a final cause or reason capable of moving God to operate. Consequently, all we need to demonstrate is how God himself can become the end or term of the world, and when we have shown this, we will have in the world that has been ennobled by such an end or term, an object that can assume the nature of end for God.<sup>143</sup>

1387. The world is a complex of various entia linked to each other and serving each other. Among these, intelligent entia hold the highest position. These intelligent creatures, to whose existence and preservation all other creatures contribute, can know God and acknowledge him for what he is, by praise, adoration and love, and can also enjoy him. They can therefore unite themselves with God, whenever God unites them to

<sup>143</sup> St. Thomas' teaching is entirely true: 'Good is said to be self-diffusive in the way that an end is said to move'\* (S.T., I, q. 5, art. 4, ad 2). This opinion, applied to God, means that God as good communicates himself to the world as its *end* and, as end, makes himself *final cause* of the creation of the world.

himself and, united with God individually, they can possess God, his very self. Granted this condition and ennoblement by participation in God, they acquire a sort of infinite value. Thus, if *in se* they remain limited and therefore without any value of their own but nevertheless become a kind of one with God, they rid themselves somehow of the defect they have from natural limitation. We could perhaps express this in the way that the book of the *divine names* does, and call God *in se* θεότης ὑπέρθεος (*divinitas super deum* [divinity above God]), and God communicating himself to the creature θεαρχικῇ ὑπαρξίς (*subsistentia divina divinitatis origo* [divine subsistence, the origin of divinity]).<sup>144</sup> The book also calls God's capability of communicating himself to his creature αὐτοθέωσις [self-deification] and counts it among the supremely intelligible powers of God in whom we can share Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀμεθέκτου προνοητιμᾶς δυνάμεις [the provident powers of the unparticipated God].<sup>145</sup>

Hence, because God is *per se* communicable, he can exist and dwell with his creature as the creature's end and term. But because God loves himself infinitely through his essence and constitution, he also loves himself dwelling in his creature as the creature's end. Thus, God can love his creature not for itself and in itself — the creature, as limited, cannot be a good for infinity or worthy of God's love — but for the end to which the creature tends and which it can obtain, that is, to be deified, made a sharer in divinity.

1388. This philosophical and ontological teaching harmonises wonderfully with revelation, which again enables us to acknowledge the ability it has given to our mind to philosophise profoundly, an ability that philosophers did not have before Christ. God made known to mankind that not only does he communicate himself to his intelligent creatures, but the divine Word himself was made man, and sent the Holy Spirit to those predestined for this. All creatures serve and are ordered to this

<sup>144</sup> The author of the book of *the divine names* gives this name to God as the good which communicates every good, including natural good (*De' div. nom.*, c. 4). But strictly speaking, it is more appropriate to God as communicating himself to created intelligences (cf. *De Coel. Hier.*, cc. 1 & 2), which can be done only supernaturally.

<sup>145</sup> *De div. nom.*, c. 11.

God-Man. Hence he is called 'heir of all things'.<sup>146</sup> It is also written that he has 'first place in all things',<sup>147</sup> to whom 'all honour and glory are referred'.<sup>148</sup> In other words, the incarnate Word is the end for which the world is made. The rest of mankind also acquire the nature of end in so far as they are incorporated in Christ and form one with him who is their living head and from whom they have life: 'He is the head of the body the Church; he is the beginning.'<sup>149</sup> It was necessary that Christ possessed the glory of being 'the first-begotten among many brethren, of whom he was the living exemplar, and they were copies of life as participants in this exemplar', 'Those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.'<sup>150</sup> Hence, those incorporated in him become through Christ the end of all other things, all of which work together for their good.<sup>151</sup> Only intelligent creatures therefore can acquire the nature of end because, as the Apostle says: 'Is it for oxen that God is concerned?'<sup>152</sup> and he calls this 'the hidden counsel of God': 'The mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints.'<sup>153</sup> Christ asked the Father for the accomplishment of this great design and great end when, with a most sublime act of conformity to the divine will, he prayed: 'I do not pray for the world',<sup>154</sup> that is, I do not pray for finite ens, which is not the end worthy of God, 'but for these whom you have given me, because they are yours',<sup>154</sup> for those in whom God's end is accomplished, for all those who, united to me ('whom you have given me'), constitute the end of the world, those freely chosen by the Father for so sublime a height ('because they are yours').

<sup>146</sup> Heb 1:2.

<sup>147</sup> Col 1: 18.

<sup>148</sup> Rom 11: 36.

<sup>149</sup> Col 1: 18.

<sup>150</sup> Rom 8: 29.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>152</sup> 1 Cor 9: 9.

<sup>153</sup> Col 1: 26.

<sup>154</sup> Jn 17: 9.

1389. Because the world is distinct from its end, which is something other, that is, the infinity of God in which the world can share, it was able to have a *final cause*, in addition to a term. The world therefore, considered in its pure nature, separate from its end, has the nature of *means* relative to the intellectual cause that makes it exist. Means and end are in fact co-relatives such that if we cannot distinguish a *means* that can be ordered to the *end*, there is no concept of *end*. But the world relative to itself has the nature of *subject of the final perfection*; it is ordered to the end so that after attaining the end, it is informed by the latter as by a perfection added to it. Through this form, it shares in the concept of *end* relative to its intellectual cause — in other words, it is loved by God.

There are two kinds of means:

*First*, those which are purely means ordered to the service of some other ens different from them. These never become *ends*; their whole value is solely in that they are ordered to the end foreign to them.

*Second*, those which, in the mind of the person producing them, are ordered to an *end* which, although different in nature from the means, nevertheless constitutes their subjective perfection — if the end and the means had the same nature, the end would have the nature of term, not of end, and *subjective natural forms* are of this kind.

Intelligent natures in the universe belong to this second group, which explains ontologically the teaching of ethics that persons have the condition of *end*, whereas natures lacking intelligence have only the condition of *means* (cf. *PE*, 66–68, 101–105). Consequently, a person who has no *end* and moreover is incapable of acquiring it, has no value. Such a person is degraded to the condition of pure *means* (*TCY*, 965, 982–983).

Hence, the *moral perfection* of human nature is the *final cause* of creation. This human nature understood on its own, and all the natures lacking intelligence that compose the World are *means* and conditions for obtaining this end. But this needs further investigation.

1390. *Moral perfection* is perfection of the human will, and person is situated in the will. This perfection is not given in the constitution of the human being. It is an added, accidental perfection that is always realised in whatever way through acts

(broadly understood) of the will. This actuality of the will is, in natural morality, a willed union with *what is divine*, because the union is with being by way of perfect, universal acknowledgment. In supernatural morality, which is a totally complete morality, the actuality is willed union with God himself. In both cases the actuality is a union with a nature different from the subjective nature of human beings. If this perfective actuality of the will were made directly or through an irresistible impulse from God, the *end* proposed by the human will would not be *what is divine*, or *God*, but only the *term* of the necessarily spontaneous, willed action: *what is divine*, that is, moral perfection according to nature, would be an *accidental term*, while *God*, that is, moral perfection above nature, would be a term both *accidental* and *supernatural*.

We human beings can attain this perfection, that is, join ourselves perfectly to *what is divine* or to *God* by fixing what is divine, or God, before ourselves as the constant end of our operations (which thus lie between us as operators and the end to which our operations lead us). In so far as we act in this way, *what is divine*, or *God*, that is, *moral perfection*, has the concept of *end* or *final cause* also for us.

'The *final cause* therefore is the good (or what we think such) that the intellective ens proposes to obtain by some means, and at least by its own operation.' The concept alone of *good* is not sufficient to constitute the concept of final cause. In order to have the concept of cause, the concept of good must have added to it the relationship between a good and an intellective ens that does not have that good in its nature but has it actually present to its thought, and wishes to obtain it and works to obtain it. Therefore, the same good can constitute many final causes, as many as there are intelligences that propose to obtain it: for a particular intelligence, it can be a *final cause* of the intelligence's operation, for another a *term* of its nature and action, and for a third, neither term nor end.

1391. The World therefore, relative to God the creator, is *means*; the moral perfection of the World, that is, the union of intelligent creatures with God is its *end*. When this end is attained by intelligent creatures, it becomes for them a supernatural, accidental and perfective form. If they have not yet attained it but propose to obtain it, or obtain it more fully by

their operations, it is the *end* or *final cause* of their operations and of themselves.

We must note here that the expression, 'A good is an end for an intellective ens' has two meanings: one indicates that the ens operates because of a good; the other, that because of a good it *must* operate. It must operate because it is ordered to good, that is, the good (granted it is obtained) is the ens' perfection; and every nature tends or must tend to its perfection, unless it is disordered or it disorders itself by the misuse of its freedom. In the first meaning, we are saying that 'a good is the end of the operation of an intelligent ens'; in the second, that 'a good is the end of the ens itself.' When we say that 'an intelligent ens has such-and-such a good as its end', we mean that the good is its ultimate perfection (granted it is acquired) and therefore either is simply the *term* of the ens or *must be* the final cause to which it directs its operations.

In the second statement, the *good* is always a true and ultimate good, but in the first, the good is something judged good by the person proposing it as the final cause of their operations. This good can be a true or false good, an ultimate or non-ultimate good. Whether it is a true or an apparent good, an ultimate or midway good, it is always a factual *final cause* of the ens' operation. Hence, the factual *final cause* for a particular intelligence can also be an evil, which the intelligence has *pretended* to be a good.

Only a *true good* therefore can 1. be a *term* and an *ultimate end* of an intelligent nature (this end of course is distinct from the end of the nature's operations), and 2. *must* be a *final cause* of the operations within the nature's power. Hence, those who have as the end of their operations an apparent good and not the supreme good, do not have God as *final cause* of their operation. Nevertheless, God is said to be the end of their operation because he *must* be such; human nature is ordered to this end, and the supernatural perfection of such a nature consists in obtaining it.

1392. Returning to the argument, the two meanings of *end* are unified in God because a cause that must be, must also be a final cause of his operation, in the way explained above, which I summarise as follows.

God loves himself infinitely. He therefore loves himself in all

the possible modes he can be. But he can be by himself and can be an end shared in by creatures. He loves himself as shared in by creatures and loves himself in creatures. He therefore creates finite entia because they, having the ability to share in God, can have in themselves an object worthy of divine love and of divine eternal action, an object which is God himself. This is the *final cause* through which God creates the world, and the world is a condition and means. When the world has obtained this end as its form, it becomes, through this divine form, an end for the divine operation. A distinction must therefore be made between on the one hand the end of creation *formally considered* and on the other its concrete end: the *formal end* is God in the creature; the *concrete end* is the creature united in such a way as to be one with God. The end is then directly willed, and the means are willed for the end.

1393. If we now pass from the theory to the fact, that is, God's work in its actual execution, we must note how God himself positively explains it in revelation. The fact and its explanation correspond in a wonderful way to the ontological and theological theory I have given. Indeed, I understand that God's work and his design in this work is the following.

The Word of God becomes incarnate in a man. God is now in the world as the *formal end* of the world. To make this end *concrete*, God had to predestine an individual of the human species to be assumed by the divine Word in one person. This predestination applies to that human individual who, assumed by the Word, was called Christ. The predestination of this individual had to be directly determined by God, because it constituted the *concrete end*; the humanity of Christ had not only the *nature of means* to the formal end but also the nature of *matter* or material cause, or of an *element* of the *concrete end*. Hence, the concrete end of the world had to be posited through a double effectivity: 1. the predestination of the human individual, and 2. the mission of the Word in the world. This double effectivity was contemporaneously fulfilled by one act of God, clearly indicated in Christ's words: 'whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world.'<sup>155</sup> 'Sanctified' refers excellently to the human individual ordained to be assumed by the Word in

<sup>155</sup> Jn 10: 36.

a personal union that is maximum sanctification: as St. Paul says, 'who was predestined, the Son of God in power according to the spirit of sanctification,'\*<sup>156</sup> and according to the Greek, *destinatus* τοῦ ὁρισθέντος [marked out].<sup>157</sup> 'Sent into the world' refers to the Word, who pre-existed from all eternity and became incarnate in time; it does not refer to human nature, which was not sent into the world, but to human nature formed as a human individual. This double effectivity is revealed as carried out in time, in Christ, God and Man, by use of the pronoun 'whom', to which the double effectivity refers.

1393a. Christ, as the *concrete end* of the world, was willed by God for himself, and this is expressed by the word *complacuit* [was pleased],<sup>158</sup> used in Scripture to indicate the final love posited by the Father in Jesus Christ. St. Thomas explains: "Was pleased" indicates that the gifts of the man, Christ, were not due to divine pronouncement, or to merits, as Photinus says, but due to the pleasure of the divine will which assumed this man in the unity of person.\*<sup>159</sup> This was an *end* therefore worthy of God. I mean 'end' relative to the world, to the ens destined to such sublimity, because absolutely speaking this end could also be simply called a *superperfective term* of God: the Father, loving his Son, loved him consequently in all the modes he could be, hence also in finite ens. St. Paul expressed this mode by the words, 'Concerning his Son, who was made to him of the seed of David, according to the flesh';\*<sup>160</sup> to have the Son also born to him in time according to the flesh accords with the Father's infinite love. There was, of course, no sudden change of any kind whatsoever in the Son as a result of his incarnation — the creature, the Man, was made God and thus became an object

<sup>156</sup> Rom 1: 4†.

<sup>157</sup> I note this difference between the Greek and the Vulgate because the Greek lacks the concept of anteriority of the divine counsel, contained in the word 'predestined'. 'Destined' seems to be a better word to express the identity of the time in which the human being was sanctified by union with the Word, and the Word was sent by assuming the human being.

<sup>158</sup> Mt 3: 17; Col 1: 19.

<sup>159</sup> *In Ep. ad Coloss.* 1: 19.

<sup>160</sup> Rom 1: 3†. In the Greek text 'to him' is missing but the sense is the same.



worthy of God's love.<sup>161</sup> Because this infinite love is infinite, it must be borne into all the objects that can be worthy of it, even objects that are truly finite; and to bear this love into these objects is to create them.

Through participation in the Spirit of Christ other human beings are also called Gods in Sacred Scripture.<sup>162</sup> St. Thomas says, 'It is clear that a person who participates in the Word of God is made God through participation.'<sup>163</sup> Thus, other human beings are objects worthy of God's love and must therefore be predestined to become conformed to Christ and be created.<sup>164</sup> In this way, these people also come to constitute the *concrete end* of the world; they are loved for themselves because informed by Christ. This is also taught by Christ: 'I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf, for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.'<sup>165</sup> These words demonstrate that such people, informed by Christ, are proper and worthy objects of divine love; they are also Christs in whom the Father places the same final love that he places in Christ, according to the prayer which Christ made for them 'so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them'.<sup>166</sup>

1394. Everything else not deified in this way is not an object worthy of God's love. God can love only himself, not the finite as finite. Everything else is willed as the means to obtain the maximum communication of his infinite self to finite creatures. This communication is accomplished in those created intelligences that, as I said, are predestined by God from eternity as the fixed term of his design. Consequently, there is a concatenation of all created entia for this ultimate end, the

<sup>161</sup> St. Thomas: "The words, "He was made", are not understood as a change, but as a union without divine change. Something new can be said about a person without any change in that person, for example, a person unchangeably seated can become seated on the right by the change of someone who is transferred"\* (*In Ep. ad Rom.*, 1: 3).

<sup>162</sup> Jn 10:34; Ps 81: 6; Exod 22.

<sup>163</sup> Jn 10: 34 ss.

<sup>164</sup> Rom 8: 29 ss.; Eph 1: 5, 11; 1 Cor 2: 7.

<sup>165</sup> Jn 16: 26–27. Cf. *ibid.*, 23; 14: 21 ss.; 18: 21–22, 26.

<sup>166</sup> Jn 17: 26.

final cause of divine operation. This final cause is in itself and absolutely ultimate; in other words it is 'the effectuation of the infinite in the finite'. But because all other creatures contribute to this effectuation, 'we can conceive a chain of means and ends', whose last link is the ultimate end that alone has absolutely the nature of end — the subordinate ends are means to the ultimate end and are called ends relative to the entities that contribute to their constitution. In fact the world is a multitude of entia, and acquires unity only through the unicity of the divine end, which, as I said, is God, that is, the shared infinite. In this multitude of entia, each ens obtains its essential form and tends to its natural perfection. This is the entic tendency I have spoken about, of which the naturation or substantial form in its fullness is the *term*. But in addition to the *essential term* of an ens, there is the term that is *accidental perfection*. In the divine mind, that which is the *term* of each ens has the nature of *subordinate end* if the ens attains it, and the material subject which moves to the term has the nature of *means*. Every ens however, in addition to the intrinsic tendency to its perfection arising from the entic force, is ordered to the service of others: by its action it contributes within certain limits to their perfection and, because they are all connected through reciprocal actions and experiences, also contributes to a certain measure of complex perfection and outcome. Consequently, all the individual and complex actions and experiences of every ens are ordered to the conservation of the world and ultimately to serving intelligent natures. They are also ordered, through an ulterior end, to the service of those intelligences in which from eternity God proposed to eternally reside. As I said, these intelligences constitute the supreme end of creation, and this end, in the divine intention, constitutes the final cause of creation.

1395. Because a first Cause which is an *intellect* has made all things for *one end*, it follows that everything is ordered and carried out with wisdom, and that all other things (their quantity, forms and modes, reciprocal connections, and acts and movements) have their reason, nothing is or happens accidentally or uselessly. If the truth of this principle is acknowledged, it is fitting and possible for each person, and principally for the philosopher, to make the effort to discover not only the final end

of the world, but also the *subordinate ends* of individual entia and their parts and of the order of their co-existence. However, the final end of the world can be established only by an *a priori* ontological argument, as I have done, or by examining how much of it God revealed for us to know more fully and certainly.

Someone may say that this is impossible both because the subordinate ends are innumerable and because we cannot clearly define the direct and indirect ends to which the natures of the universe, which are known only imperfectly, can be directed by the sublime mind of him who created them. In my opinion this objection<sup>167</sup> proves only that we cannot fully discover all the direct or indirect ends of the entia in the world and of their laws and actions, but does not in any way prove that we cannot discover some. Precisely because everything in the world is the work of a most perfect Intellect, nothing is useless or happens uselessly and without a final reason. If we therefore ask what are the subordinate ends of the entia in the world and of their parts, we can reply 1. that in the divine intention the proximate end of each is its natural perfection, and 2. all the uses which they reciprocally serve, that is, everything each contributes with its action to the perfection of the others are ends of their constitution and action. We can in fact know at least partly the natural perfection of each ens as well as many of the uses they serve, and because their perfection and uses are also final reasons for them, we can know many, but not all, of these subordinate ends.<sup>168</sup>

1396. The natural perfection of each ens, however, and the uses of reciprocal advantage are not always attained. These are therefore *ideal ends*. But when they are in fact attained and in whatever quantity, they are *willed, real ends* of the divine

<sup>167</sup> The abuse by scientists of *final causes* has led modern thinkers to excess: they have excluded them from philosophy. Francis Bacon took the first step in this direction. Although he did not criticise the study of final causes, he excluded it from the natural sciences, relegating it to metaphysics of which he had formed a false concept that bound metaphysics to nature (*De Augum. scient.*, bk. 3. Cf. De Luc, *Précis de la Philos. de Bacon*, vol. 2 in *Append.*, tit. 1, and De Maistre, *Examen de la Philos. de Bacon*, c. 18).

<sup>168</sup> 'When we say that *such-and-such a being exists for this end*, we can be saying something plausible and even obvious, but when we say that *such-and-such a being exists solely for this end*, we can be saying something absurd' (De Maistre, *Examen de la Philos. de Bacon*, c. 18, §3).

Intellect that is their cause. Many *ideal ends* are also *willed ends*, but not all, because they are not all realised. The non-realisation of some is seen as an exception. The realisation of the others leads our mind to know the *ideal ends* resulting from the nature and connection of the entia in the world. The *exception* also leads our mind to investigate ulterior ends, because even these exceptions to the realisation of the natural, ideal ends of entia, decreed by the first Cause that is an Intellect, must have their end. This end however does not consist in the proximate end of the formal perfection of entia or of the uses and advantages they could bring each other — neither this perfection nor these uses and advantages are obtained. Consequently, a greater *end* of a more universal or more magnificent good valuable in itself must be in the intention and will of the first intellect. This ultimate end is attained, and is the glorification of God in man and of man in God.

We can conclude therefore that ‘the ideal end of every part of the world is all the good each part can produce or obtain’, and that the real, willed end is ‘every good which is obtained by means of all that exists and all the operations of what exists’. Also, the lack of every partial good, which could be obtained by the nature and operations of such entia considered *per se*, is a means to an end of ulterior good that is more universal or more visible, and certainly is a means to the *ultimate end* which must be obtained through the omnipotence of the First Cause.

1397. The scientists who condemn the study of final causes as impossible, useless, or harmful to the progress of science can be answered as follows (cf. *Logica*, 958, 962):

1. The study is not impossible, as we have in fact seen. What is impossible is simply that we cannot know all the *subordinate ends*: we can know them better and more of them in proportion to our study of them, as in any science.

2. It is not useless, and this is clear from the fact that man does not seek and love only knowledge of physical things: the study of final causes pertains principally to a *free science* (as Aristotle calls it), which is loved for itself and not because it serves other sciences, and in this way it is far superior to physical events. We can also add that it is completely false to hold that the study of subordinate final causes cannot in any way help the progress of science. The greatest scientists, whose

thought is not closed within the bounds of material science, have judged contrariwise. Leibniz was convinced that many discoveries could be made in physiology and medicine by investigating the uses and ends of various parts of the body.<sup>169</sup> Boyle wrote a book about final causes, in which he says he understood from Harvey that the discovery of the circulation of the blood came to him while considering the use to which the venous valves could be ordered by nature.<sup>170</sup>

3. It is not harmful, precisely because it is useful. Everything good is made harmful through abuse or error.

The principal, contrary errors about final causes are two: the error of those who deny final causes, attributing everything to chance and thus leaving events and their circumstances without an explanation of any kind, and the error of those who, seeing the traces of intelligence extending throughout the universe, give intelligence to things that do not have it, as if these things all operated for an end; an example is the history of modern philosophy in the Stahlians, who claimed that animality operated with intelligence (*PSY*, 1: 391–419). Aristotle himself did not argue clearly on the matter, as I indicated when he confused *term* with the concept of *end* and said that nature operates for an end,<sup>171</sup> and that the *form* is the *end* to which nature tends. The *form*, as obtained by entia, is simply the real term of their entic force; as in the mind that creates and moves entia, it is the end or intentional cause. But ‘form’ is a word of many meanings. When it means act, not only does each ens have its constitutive act but the whole series and their complex order, and each of their groups, have an end in the divine mind which, when obtained (that is, realised in the groups or compounds) can be called *form* or act. But the final act or form exceeds nature; it consists in the union with infinite ens, which is something other and different from every natural form.

Abuse in the study of subordinate ends also arises when it is taken as a principle from which to deduce natural laws, while excluding the principle of active causes, which manifest themselves by observation and experience.

<sup>169</sup> *Observat. ad Theor. Stahlii*, Opp. t. 2, p. 2.

<sup>170</sup> *De causis finalibus*, Londini, 1668.

<sup>171</sup> *Physic.* 2. Cf. Julii Sireonii, *De Fato*, 4: 20.

## Article 6

## The order of the three modes of cause

1398. As we have seen, cause is necessarily and simultaneously efficient, exemplar and final. But if only one of these modes were lacking, it would not be cause; it could be nothing more than an abstract element of cause, which I call an 'elementary cause', so as not to distance myself too much from the language commonly used by philosophers.

Nevertheless these three modes, although they must co-exist if there is to be cause, have an order. This order, in which *cause* is constituted in its three modes, can be compared by analogical abstraction with the order which constitutes infinite ens in its three modes. If we make this comparison, we find that the order in cause is the opposite of the order in infinite ens. In the order of infinite being we conceive, or certainly we name, first the Principle or Father, which by analogy is referred to as the efficient cause, and then its first term, the Word, which by analogy is referred to as the exemplar cause, and finally the second term, the Holy Spirit, which by analogy is referred to as the final cause, that is, end. But the order seen in the full constitution of cause is the opposite: the end is conceived first, then the exemplar and finally the efficient cause. Note however that here the discussion concerns cause in its act and not cause in potency. As I have said, cause means that 'a subject is conceived that is logically prior to the quality of cause'. If the subject were conceived solely as producing, it would not be a cause but a principle. On the other hand if the concept of a subject that is a cause is conceived without attributing to it the quality of cause, the subject can be thought as a cause in potency. Hence, it is constituted in the condition of a cause in act when 1. an end is proposed, and then 2. the exemplar which serves as a norm for obtaining the end is formed, and finally 3. the exemplar is actuated. All this is carried out in God with one sole act, but the human mind finds this very order in its own concepts. However, we need to investigate this order further to have a better understanding of its nature.

1399. If an intellective ens had no term previously given it by its nature (to use a supposition that is unacceptable), it could

never propose an end. Let us look at this fact as it is in man. Man always proposes ends for his action because he has a natural tendency to universal good. *Universal* good is the natural term of humanity and indeed of every intellectual ens. If we supposed that man did not have this natural term and end of his nature (that is, universal good), it would be impossible for him to propose an *end* for his actions because nothing would move him to that — the end he might propose for himself would not be good either for himself or for others because no one can know what good is if they have no tendency to it. Indeed, the very concept of tendency is impossible without the concept of good, and the concept of good is impossible without the tendency to it, because 'good is that to which we tend'. Hence, if an intelligent subject does not first have good as its possessed term, or at least have the tendency to good as its possessable term, a final cause cannot exist in act, that is, the intelligent subject cannot propose an end for itself. This explains ontologically why the operational order of a *cause* is the opposite of the operational order of a *principle*. In fact, a result of the observation I have made is that we cannot conceive a cause if we do not first conceive that a principle has completed all its actuality and constituted an ens in its ultimate term; a cause needs this ultimate term of an ens which good is in order to begin to be constituted; as essentially and necessarily intellectual, it does not begin to posit itself in act without proposing an end for itself. But it cannot propose an end for itself if it does not first have good for its natural term, and good is the finalisation of an ens in its perfect constitution. Therefore, the concept of cause begins where the concept of an intellectual ens, which is the good, finishes. Consequently, in the order of being as conceived by the mind the following are, as it were, linked together: principle—objective term—amative term (the good)—Cause.

Cause, therefore, arises from the amative term, which begins to be an *end* that the intellectual subject proposes to itself.

1400. But our investigation must go still deeper.

*Good*, the natural term of intellectual natures, is a relative entity that can be in an *absolute mode* or a *relative mode*.

In absolute mode, good is the terminative and perfective good of being because being *per se* is absolute and not relative. In relative mode, good is what is desired by a particular subject but

because it is not terminative and perfective of being, it is not good and is not naturally desired by all the subjects capable of desiring good in absolute mode. Good in absolute mode is, by its very nature, thought absolutely or objectively, that is, it is not referred to a particular subject. On the other hand, good in relative mode cannot be thought without reference to the particular subject that desires it. In the creature these two modes of good are distinguished and constitute what is called *subjective good* and *objective good* (cf. *PE*, 69–113). They are not distinguished in infinite Being because it itself is Being, while good in absolute mode is the ultimate, personal form that perfects infinite Being and is this Being itself. Hence, infinite Being is absolutely and essentially good, and good for all subjects capable of desiring it. Moreover, if we consider that God is also personal *objective being*, we see that objective good, considered in itself, must be essential to him, must be his good, must itself be good for itself. If good, therefore, in absolute, objective mode, is subjectively good for God, then objective good and subjective good in God are not distinguished but one is the other and vice versa.

To love objective good is to love what is a good for all the entia capable of it. This explains the natural instinct of divine goodness to communicate itself, and the common saying that 'good is diffusive of itself'. We can thus explain the possibility that God determined himself to create, without any obligation to do so, by the need to constitute himself in complete mode, but posteriorly to this perfect constitution. We can also explain the effective power to create the world, the power to propose an end for himself. Hence the final cause in God, that is, the mode of cause called end, which in God is solely the intention to make himself (who is absolute, essential good) the end of intelligent finite entia, is the first actuality thinkable in God in the process of the creative act. He made this intention therefore because he had in himself the power for it, which resides in the instinct arising from the love for good in absolute mode. This love is not limited to the good of himself (if it were, it would be a case of purely subjective good), but extends to the good of others, to the greatest good of all possible entia, because all this good of other entia is comprised in the good that is in absolute, objective mode. Moreover, love of this good is so proper to the absolute



Being that all the good of others is also good for him who loves good existing in absolute mode. God therefore, having this power, and this instinct, in him, drew it into its act. Thus the end of creation, the final cause of everything created, was actually in his will.

1401. The eternal intelligence, having proposed this end, had to conceive finite ens in which this end might be realised. This second operation is the eternal tipification, that is, the formation of the *exemplar* of the world, and I have explained at length how this could, and had to, be done. In this way, the *exemplar cause* in the divine mind, that is, in the absolute object (second personal form) is added to the final cause in the divine will (third personal form).

After the Exemplar of everything created has been conceived, all that remained was to produce the realisation of the Exemplar by means of the energy of the eternal will of being. This act of energy is called efficient cause and arises in the principle of the first intellection (first personal form of divine being).

This process of the actuation in God of the three causes of the world does not admit any succession of time in the trinity of acts. All is done with an eternal act, and only a mind that abstracts produces these distinctions in the act. This one act, pertaining to the divine essence, is equally common to all three persons. Each has it identical in his mode of being, that is, in the mode in which each has the essence, a mode constituted by the relationships. But precisely because of these different modes, the efficient cause is appropriate to the Father, the exemplar to the Son, and the end to the Holy Spirit, as I have explained elsewhere.

#### Article 7

The twelve links in the ontological chain which bind together the whole of ens, both finite and infinite, in its order

1402. The logical order therefore of the creative act is: first, the end, appropriate to the Holy Spirit, next the Exemplar, appropriate to the Word, and finally the efficient cause, appropriate to the Principle of the divine Trinity. This order is the

opposite of that existing in the constitution of divine being. Hence the whole chain of finite and infinite being is logically composed of six links: 1. Principle, 2. Word, 3. Holy Spirit; 4. Final cause, 5. Exemplar cause, 6. Efficient cause.

These six golden links express the order of *cause*.

But if we consider *what is caused*, in its full constitution, the chain continues on through another six links, but always subject to the following law: 'From every three links three other links result and proceed in a reverse order.'

In fact, the first cause that is conceived in what is caused is the *real subsistence* under the influence of the efficient cause.

The next thing conceived is the *form* under the influence of the exemplar cause.

And the third thing is the *final desire* under the influence of the final cause.

The natural order of the constitution of the creature finishes with these three links.

But the *final desire* of a limited ens cannot by its nature obtain absolute good; finite ens of itself can know this good only in a negative and analogical way. Hence, the *end* that God proposed for himself, an end worthy of infinite goodness and magnificence, required that he communicate himself beneficently to his creature. This communication produced a union exceeding all created power, it produced a supernatural order. Although this is not the place to discuss supernatural communication, I must make some observations about it so that all the golden links of the great ontological chain are seen. We know in fact through divine revelation that the Holy Spirit gave the Word to the world by means of the incarnation of the Word, which came about through the work of the Spirit. The Word incarnate then revealed the Father to human beings. And here begins the perpetual analogical cycle, but I must leave discussion of this to another time.

1403. If we wish to see all the links in the chain, that is, the chain of the entic actions, the twelve links, of which the chain is composed and continues, the chain can be arranged as follows:

1. Principle, 2. Word, 3. Holy Spirit; 4. Final cause, 5. Exemplar cause, 6. Efficient cause = 7. Finite real, 8. Intelligible form, 9. Final desire — 10. Operation of the Holy Spirit, through which 11. the Word is incarnated, who reveals 12. the Father.

In this pattern we see that the first three links demonstrate the eternal constitution of infinite Ens, the second three the eternal constitution of Cause, the next three the constitution of the Caused, that is, finite ens, and the last three the sublime elevation of the Caused, or finite ens, to the Infinite, that is, to the supernatural order inserted in creation. By this insertion creation is completed according to the eternal, pre-established design.

We also see that each of these four triads has a sequential order opposite to that of the previous triad. Thus, the second triad is attached, through its first link (the final Cause), to the last link of the previous triad, that is, to the Holy Spirit to whom the end is appropriate. Then comes the exemplar cause which is appropriate to the Word, and lastly the efficient cause which is appropriate to the Father. The first link of the third triad that presents what is first conceived in the caused, that is, in the effect, is joined to the last link of the previous triad, that is, to the efficient cause corresponding to the Father; the second link, the intelligible form, is the realisation of the Exemplar corresponding to the Word; and the third link, the final desire, is derived from the final cause corresponding to the Holy Spirit. The fourth triad begins from this third link, because the final desire is sublimely elevated by the Holy Spirit to the supernatural order which the Word gives to the world. Thus, the world receives the revelation of the Father who, revealed to human beings, constitutes the last link and completes the constitution of the supernatural order in creation. And this constitution initiates the blessed, analogical and infinite cycle, a subject which is outside this discussion. In this fourfold triad, where the subsequent sequence inverts the order of the preceding sequence, only the middle term never changes place: the *Word*, the *Exemplar*, the *intelligible Form* and the *incarnate Word* always occupy the middle place of each triad as an immutable mediator.

These twelve links are therefore in contact with each other in a continuous sequence, and reveal a continuous sequence of life and action in the whole of being, in whatever mode it may be, in the totality of the whole.

## Article 8

## The influence of cause on effect

1404. This is the golden chain therefore that binds and embraces everything. I call it an ontological chain and we see from its teaching how the differences and contrasts that distinguish entities and multiply entia, do not in any way prevent a continuous sequence of action in everything and, as it were, an uninterrupted passage of being from the beginning to the end of all things.

Thus the great antinomy between the unity of being and the multiplicity of relative entities and of entia is reconciled, and the doctrine which has only its beginning in the system of dialectical unity is brought to completion. In the ontological chain we see not only dialectical unity but also a unity of real action. This one *action* does not remove but rather produces the diversity and multiplicity of entia. The identity of an ens does not depend on the identity of the entic, creative *action* we see in the chain, but is relative to the *subjects*. Action however is a concept in which we prescind and abstract from particular, finite subjects, because not every action constitutes a complete subject, and it is the complete subject that is the term of the creative action, not the *action* itself.

In order to understand better and as much as possible the manner of this continuous sequence of action, we need to consider the influence of the eternal cause on the caused and thus explain the transition from the first six links of the chain, which concern infinite ens, to the other six, which concern finite ens. This is the abyss that separates the finite from the infinite, an abyss that at first sight is not seen as passable. The question therefore to be investigated is: 'What is the influence of cause on effect?'

We can answer it by summarising and adapting what we have been discussing.

1405. The principle is this: 'The divine intelligence abstracts the Exemplar of the world from its own being and with an act of its will realises the world.' This abstraction, this exemplar-type is not therefore, as such and understood on its own, the divine essence but the possible and intelligible world, finite ens.

However, because the divine intelligence drew this abstraction from the divine essence, it makes known an ideal essence that is eminently in the divine essence and not in the condition of idea or finite, as is the case with every abstraction we make even from finite ens. If I abstract the entic form from an entic body, the form remains in the body from which I have abstracted it, not as an abstract form separate from the body and from the other qualities proper to the body but on the contrary determined and forming one unity inseparable in reality from all the properties of the body. However there is this difference: the abstractions we extract from finite entia are mental entia that are more noble than the finite entia from which we have extracted them because 1. they are intelligible *per se*, whereas finite entia are not intelligible *per se*, and 2. they are universals, whereas the individual finite entia from which the mind abstracted them are particular. But in regard to God himself, he is intelligible *per se*, and is universal in the sense that he has no limits whatsoever. Consequently, all theosophical abstractions are less noble than the ens from which they are mentally extracted.

The Exemplar of the World is a theosophical abstraction drawn from the divine essence in so far as the Exemplar is an object of the divine mind. The Exemplar therefore performs the function of mediator, so to speak, between infinite Ens and finite ens. Everything that is in the Exemplar is in the created world, and also in God, but in an eminent mode. We therefore see the ontological reason why I said that 'ideal being is an appurtenance of God and can correctly be called divine, but not God': it is divine, because taken from God by abstraction and by operation of the divine intelligence; it is not God, because God has not only the perfections that the Exemplar manifests but has all these perfections limitlessly, without distinction and, as it were, fused into one with other infinite good.

In the same way there is in the nature of idea considered as a theosophical abstraction, which it is, the ontological explanation for the *analogical likeness* between infinite and finite ens. By means of this likeness the mind rises from the perfections of the creature to acknowledgement of the creator's perfections. Only idea can serve as a means for this transition, because at the same time as it makes the world intelligible *in se*, it manifests *in se* a kind of ray of divinity, that is, entities drawn by abstraction

from divine being where they subsist in a better and more complete, other mode.

Thus, because the Exemplar of the world is formed by divine abstraction, an act of the divine will that pronounces the Exemplar makes the modelled world subsist. Because God is nothing but being, his will is being, and hence the act of his will is an act of being, and the term of this act cannot be anything but being. Consequently, the act with which God wills, produces the being of the world, that is, the being relative to the world, which in the Exemplar of the world remains in God in objective being. Indeed, relative to the world, that which is being of subjective form is, in God, subjective being of the world, which nevertheless is contained in objective being, that is, in the Exemplar in whom he sees and produces the world. In the case of tipification, that is, the formation of the Exemplar, I have already said that it is not done with an act different from that of creation but is always distinguished by us through an abstractive operation.

1406. Here we must recall the explanation I gave of abstraction. Being, in so far as referred to the mind, is object. Object-being, as a supreme form in which being is, is a Maximum Container. As such, it contains Being in the subjective form and being in the moral form. Containing them in itself and therefore investing them with its own form which is objective, it presents them to the mind, to which they are therefore intelligible. The eternal Mind (Being in the subjective form) necessarily intuites object-Being and all that it contains. But because the mind's gaze is in addition free, it can see in the object what it wants and exclude the rest from this free gaze: it can therefore consider object-Being as a maximum container prescinding totally from its content. With this operation in which it considers solely the container, it has made an abstraction with which it formed ideal, undetermined, universal being. This object-Being contains nothing actually, because the mind does not look at the content, which remains completely undetermined; this is the origin of the infinite virtuality of being. The origin of all logical forms is also explained in the same way: they are ideal essences whose content is left undetermined, hidden in the greater or lesser virtuality.

Thus, the mind of a free subject has the faculty to restrict in

varying degree its consideration of the things contained in objective being. In us such a restriction is not totally free because the first restriction, imposed on us by nature, limits our natural intuition to container object-Being without content. The divine mind however has no such limitation and can therefore freely consider either nothing or any number of things contained in objective Being.

Let us suppose that the divine mind, after considering the maximum abstract, that is, *object-Being* as pure container, without any thought for the content, wishes to consider also subjective Being contained in it. It can consider this in its totality and perfection but, after that, it is free, by the same law, to consider it within certain limitations and think it first as *limitable* and *limited*. This already provides it with two abstract concepts: one of *limitable subject* in the object, the other of *limited subject* (dialectical matter). The limitations can be of *quality* and *quantity*.

1407. We will first consider limitations of quality.

Subjective being in its qualitative perfection is an act-subject of moral and practical intelligence. If we supposed that the eternal Mind wished to omit from its special consideration the act of moral and practical intelligence and indeed of every intelligence, the only thing remaining of the object would be a sentient, subjective principle. If we also supposed that the divine Mind omitted the act of feeling, only a feelingless *reality* would remain. In this way the abstracting Mind formed the abstract idea of *reality*, the greatest abstract thinkable in subjective being. The abstracting mind splits being into three concepts: 1. the concept of subjective being with a moral, practical and intellective act; 2. the concept of subjective being with a sensitive act, and 3. the concept of subjective being of pure, feelingless *reality*. If we wanted to separate the act of the speculative intellect from the act of the moral, practical intellect, we would have four abstract concepts, instead of three.

1408. If we stop at these three ideal, abstract elements of subjective being 1. pure reality, 2. the act of feeling, and 3. the act of understanding, we see that in the mind they are three *undetermined concepts* which contain three *undetermined essences*, and the most undetermined essence is solely *reality*. Now, that which is undetermined is the characteristic of what

philosophers called *matter*. *Pure reality* is therefore first matter in the subjective order; I will call it *real first matter*. But because the general concept of feeling is also undetermined (neither the degree nor the mode of feeling is defined), it retains something of *matter* and although it does not present the mind with a determined act, it nevertheless presents it with an act. And if we consider *feeling*, abstracted from all its terms, it presents itself as one simple act and therefore also determined. That which is a determined act was called *form*. Therefore the act of feeling relative to a feeling is form. But because the *feeling element* in the created entia that we know does not stand on its own but is relative to something else, that is, to the *felt*, and because the felt is an undetermined term which can be called *sense-stimulating matter*, the concept of the *feeling element* also remains undetermined when understood not on its own but in its relationship with its felt term, which is another nature with which the feeling is necessarily united in order to subsist. The feeling element therefore, which in itself is *form*, has, *relative* to the felt term, the nature of what is determinable and thus of *relative matter*.

Hence, a pure feeling element cannot subsist unless its *sense-stimulating matter*, that is, its felt term, is determined in quality and quantity. Thus, the feeling element must exist not solely as a potential or initial principle but as an actuated principle. This actuation, which can be effected in different ways according to the diverse determination of the term, is the only determination susceptible by the universal concept of a feeling together with the essence intuited in it. In these feeling elements therefore the initial or potential principle is distinguished from its actuation which makes the potential principle truly subsist, determining it as this particular thing rather than another. Hence, the actuation of the feeling element is the material part in it and constitutes its *relative matter*, and in virtue of this actuation it is that particular thing. The initial and potential principle is not therefore the particular thing but something prior to it.

If we consider the nature of the *felt*, we see that it is something relative to the feeling element. The mind cannot conceive anything relative without a prior concept of something absolute, that is, something considered as having being *in se*. This is an abstraction made from the relationships of the thing and gives a



concept of substance. In *Psychology* I explained how this concept can be attributed to corporeal matter (*PSY*, 2: 775–822). Thought therefore can strip the felt of its relationship with the feeling element, in which case a felt no longer remains before the mind; all that remains is an *unfelt reality*, which I have called *first matter* in the subjective order. From this we see that first matter in the subjective order, that is, *pure reality*, from which every feeling principle and every relationship with this principle have been removed, is purely a *potential term* of the feeling principle. Hence, *pure reality* has the nature of *term*, not of *principle*, and cannot exist unless received in the feeling element and not as a receiving act.

The subjective form of being is act. But *pure reality*, thus abstracted, has no act. It is therefore not a subject (unless dialectical). To distinguish this abstract nature, I called it *extra-subjective nature*, which reduces to the subjective form because mentally extracted from this form by abstraction.

1409. The pure feeling element, separate from every intellective act, is considered either on its own, existing in an absolute mode, or in its actuation as *relative* to the felt. In the first mode it is simply the abstract act of feeling, which exists solely through abstraction and does not constitute any individual but rather the *form*, abstractly considered, of all feeling elements. In the second mode it is a *relative* that subsists in so far as it has in itself the *felt*, which is pure reality in its relationship of sensibility. It gives this quality of being felt to pure reality, and through this reality exists as sentient. It depends therefore on its matter, that is, on the reality that it makes felt in itself, and thus constitutes itself. This act with which the feeling principle is posited in being pertains to the subjective form, but imperfectly, because the act terminates in what is only extrasubjective, and depends on this. Hence, the feeling element cannot be called a subject as such but a subject that is still incomplete and does not participate in being *per se* but in an element abstracted from the subjective form of being.

1410. Let us now consider the intellective principle and intellective act. This act, in *its universal concept*, is more determined than the feeling principle. The feeling principle is *in se* simple and one, but not so in its term: relative to the term it remains undetermined (relative matter). On the other hand the

intellective principle is not only one and simple *in se* as principle but also in its term; its term is objective being, and being is always one and totally simple. In this objective being as maximum container, we must include, at least virtually, being in the subjective form and being in the moral form.

Therefore the intellective principle and intellective act is an ulterior act, which presupposes two preceding acts, not separate (in which case they retain their material element) but identified in and with this ulterior act. Indeed, the intellective act presupposes something that intuits object-being, but anything that intuits is a living thing, and a living thing is an *act of feeling* (AMS, 45). Moreover, a feeling element presupposes a *reality*, that is, a real entity.

1411. We must note carefully however that these three *essences* exist separately from each other in one state, while in another they are unified into one principle-act. If we consider *reality* existing separately from the other two essences, the only nature it can have is that of an unfelt *term* of a *feeling principle*. If we mentally conceive a feeling principle on its own without an intellective act, it can subsist only as a principle whose term is pure reality that is not felt through the real relationship of sensibility. Hence, the *feeling principle* is conceived only in a mode posterior to its term to which it is united as an act actuating the term. In this case *reality* no longer remains as it is in absolute mode but acquires a new relative quality which makes it a *felt element*. But if we conceive solely the intellective principle and act, we see that it must be alive and feeling, on the basis that a dead thing cannot intuit. But because this act is a feeling element identical with the intuiting element, it does not need an extrasubjective term in order to exist; the act itself of intuition *per se* feelable and feeling, is sufficient. We also understand that this intellective principle is subsistent, and this subsistence gives it the condition of *real*. Its reality however is not pure reality or purely felt reality, but the reality proper to the feeling principle, that is, its subsistence. The three essences therefore are unified in the feeling principle and, thus unified, have a totally different nature from the nature they presented to the mind when it looked at each separate from the others. We have here a very clear example of the nature of an *ens*: although in itself perfectly one, it is nevertheless divisible by the abstracting mind, and

when divided, the abstract parts change their nature in such a way that some parts are divided, while others, in the ens, are indivisible. But the parts divided by the mind can acquire their own existence through the activity of the creative mind and on certain conditions. Hence, the work of creation.

One of these conditions, on which the philosopher must reflect, is the order of anteriority and posteriority present in these abstract essences. This order results from what I have said. We saw that the pure feeling element can be conceived as existing only if the reality is first conceived, and that the intelligent element cannot be conceived if it is not conceived as feeling and real, that is, subsistent. This is due to the nature of the *act*, which is conceived by the mind as produced and finalised at different levels. The act itself does not have levels and is not divided; it is the mind that conceives it as having these levels and divisions in the act's purely objective existence in the mind. Granted therefore that the totally finalised act, in so far as it does not have the mode of subjective being but of objective being, that is, like something subjective contained in the object, can, as it were, be mentally truncated by subtracting its ultimate level, the truncated act will still remain, and if a little bit more is removed, it will be even more truncated until by means of this mental mutilation we arrive at its beginning or its root. Clearly therefore, if the beginning and root are removed, nothing remains before the mind. Yet without the beginning we cannot think the increase or production of the act whether by one, two or more levels. It is impossible to think the more without the less, or to think the second level without the first, or any level whatsoever of actuality without the preceding levels. Furthermore, this division of the act into many levels of production is not arbitrary: the act and the ens, by their very nature, place before the mind these articulations, so to speak, of the total act.

1412. The purpose of all this present discussion is however to explain to what extent the caused shares in the cause. We must therefore examine still more closely the nature of these subjective abstracts; we must investigate the reason why only in certain entities can the total act be divided by the abstracting mind. And the explanation is: we are not speaking here about any abstraction, but about that particular abstraction through which the mind forms for itself subjective abstracts which can

then receive the act of being and so become subsistent individuals.

No entity of any kind conceived by the mind can subsist *in se* as an individual unless it has two states:

1. It must be and have a subjective principle. As we have seen, the subject is 'that which is first in an ens; it is one, and container of the rest'. Consequently, the only part of the act that can be mentally reduced is the apex, that is, its final production and completion. Its radical principle must always be retained; without it, the ens itself which would now lack the first element of an ens, would not be present. Thus, if the intellective actuality, which is the ultimate actuality, is removed from the intellective subject, the mind still has present to it a feeling entity, and if this also is removed, the reality remains. We could not however remove the reality and leave the rest, because this rest would be one of the hypothetical, dialectical abstracts that cannot subsist — the subsistence of a sentient element or an intelligent element that is not real cannot in any way be conceived, because to be real is precisely to subsist.

2. The entity that remains before the mind must have not only its beginning but be such that it can be determined in all its parts, because anything that retains within itself some undetermined part cannot subsist. Consequently, if an entity remains that can be fully determined, and no levels of actuality need to be added to it, it can receive the act of being and thus attain subsistence.

Granted that the mind can determine the entity in all respects, this determination accomplishes what I have called *typical abstraction*, because the mind has the type of an ens. If the mind is Being itself, as is precisely the First Mind, then clearly the willed act of being must give the act of being and hence subsistence to the ens which seen by the mind in the object is called *type*.

The mind therefore is that which multiplies type-entia. The act of the First Mind's will, which is an act of being, gives to the ens the subjective act of being, thus creating it, making it exist *in se*. But if this act of the will is replicated (and the will can replicate the act an indefinite number of times because the will of being is infinite and therefore of inexhaustible power), other

individuals, corresponding to the same *type*, will come into existence. The only thing that could prevent this multiplication of individuals would be the nature of the type itself, that is, when the mind has determined it with determinations that would exclude the multiplicity of individuals, as we saw must be the case of the *fullest species*. This limitation therefore of the number of individuals of the type itself is not a result of the will's impotence but solely of the nature of the type that the Mind has formed. Granted this type, the opposite would involve contradiction.

Hence, the *supreme causes* of the multiplication of finite entia are two: 1. the eternal Mind which multiplies the types and species of entia (ideal intuition), and 2. the creative Will (Word) which, by replication of its acts, multiplies individuals of the same type. But this 'replication of acts' is an expression I use solely to make the matter comprehensible by applying the analogy of what happens in us. The act of the divine will is in fact unique, but in its effect it corresponds to many diverse acts. Therefore when I say that it replicates itself, it simply bears itself with its extreme simplicity into many individuals simultaneously.

1413. Before continuing, we must consider how this multiplication of typical entia produces entia that are diverse in nature and substance, and cannot in any way be confused with infinite Ens. I have already dealt with this but the importance of the argument requires me to insist on it all the more.

Two principal elements are distinguished in a finite ens existing *in se*: 1. its nature, and 2. the act of subjective being through which it exists. Both of these must be seen as distinct from supreme being. I will begin with the first.

We note that *subjective natures* differ from each other through their ultimate, immanent and typical act, which the ancients also called *form*. This does not contradict what I said, that the beginning or root must be present in the abstraction made by the mind; without this, there would be no subject. The subjective beginning of an ens changes nature when, through abstraction, it acquires ultimate, immanent actuality. In fact a subject is 'the first thing and the container of everything in an ens'. It must therefore change if there is a change in the content that determines it and makes it the container of this nature

rather than another. The beginning or root is simply the subject in an abstract potency, not a true subject that is. Such a subject is, only when it extends to and embraces everything in the ens; indeed, strictly speaking the word 'nature' means that which a *subject* contains. If therefore the ultimate, immanent actuality of an ens changes, the subject specifically changes. This happens both with the true subject and, granted there is a reason, with the dialectical subject. It cannot be said that if we mentally remove intelligence from an intellective subject, what remains before our mind has the same nature as the intellective subject, nor, if we remove feeling being from a feeling subject, the previous nature remains. Clearly then, the specific nature of different entia is constituted by their ultimate, immanent, typical act.

1414. It follows from this principle that, whenever the mind that has a particular subject as its object removes the ultimate, immanent and typical act from the subject, another nature remains present to it. If this nature is determinable, and is later determined in all respects, it becomes the type of an ens with a nature that differs from the nature of the perfect subject on which the mind made the abstraction.

Furthermore, the severance carried out by the mind on the last, immanent, typical act of a particular subject gives rise to two differences between on the one hand what remains in the mind and on the other the subject on which the mind carried out the abstractive severance:

The first difference is the diversity of nature as a result of the change in the finalisation of the act that specifies the nature of the subject and ens.

The second is the entitative diversity, because the entity remaining before the mind is still an undetermined entity and hence such that it is not in any way a *typical ens*; it is an entity without form, understood as matter.

In fact this entity, severed from the last act that it had in the previous subject and precisely because it lacks this last act, also lacks the determination it received from this act. Because the last, permanent act of a subjective ens truly gives the ens its perfect determination, the entity, now severed from the last act which determined it, differs from the first subject, that is, from the entity determined by the last act, as a non-ens differs from an ens, which is maximum diversity.

For this *undetermined entity* to become a typical ens, the Mind must add other determinations to it, and these will differ totally from the determinations it had in the preceding subject, where the entity was determined by the last act that was severed by the abstraction carried out by the mind.

But where does the mind find these determinations that need to be added to the undetermined mental entity? Granted that the entity in itself does not have its full determination, the mind is obliged to find it outside it, in another entity, and then join it to this other entity in order to determine it. Two very important corollaries result from this:

1. A *finite ens* must as such always be *composed* in some way.

2. It must always be something *relative to something else*.

But there is nothing of this in infinite Being. As a pure and totally ultimate act, it has *in se*, in its infinity, every perfect determination.

In fact infinite Ens is Being, and Being is intellection, an intellection that is simultaneously *per se* an intelligible object.

1415. As long as 'intelligible intellection-Being' remains before the mind, there is infinite Ens and nothing else. The mind cannot pass from this concept to that of finite ens, unless it first detach the ultimate part of its act, the part that is intelligible, from infinite Ens, as I have said. Once this intelligible part is detached, only the intelligent part remains without an object; it is therefore purely a subjective beginning or root. How then can this abstract entity that I call *intellectuality* be determined? An object, which will not be the abstract entity itself, must be added to it — adding the abstract entity would simply restore infinite Ens, intellectuality would be determined by that extremity of its act that we have mentally detached. It must therefore be what we made it when we detached its extreme act, and in this state we must determine it. To do this, we need only give it an object to intuit, provided the object is something different from itself. Thus the finite intelligent is 1. *composed* of itself-subject and of the object determining it, as something else that is joined to it through intuition, and is 2. *relative* to this other thing, that is, to the object given it not as its act but purely as its foreign term.

The *object*, which determines the *intellectual essence* thus

abstracted from its ultimate actuation, can vary, with the result that the essence can be determined differently according to the variation of the object determining it. The *intellectual essence* therefore constitutes a *supreme genus* of finite entia, while the various modes of its objective *determination* that give it immanent, typical actuality, constitute the various *species*.<sup>172</sup>

1416. We have removed the object and been left with the *intellectual entity*, so-called because it is conceived as determinable by an object that is not one of its acts but something else that unites to it through manifestation and thus determines it. But if we now also remove the intellectual actuality from this intellectual entity, we are left with a life without intellect. This concept of a living but non-intelligent entity cannot be determined by an object manifesting itself. Hence the only determination that it can receive and does not *in se* have, must come from another entity that will unite to it not in the way that an object and subject unite but in the way that two entities can unite in the subjective order. This other determining entity therefore will not be something infinite and eternal, like the object, but must be something finite and contingent that will serve as term of the act of the first entity. In fact, in the subjective order, if two entities are to compose one nature so that one serves as a determination of the other, they must both be finite, because the subjective infinite cannot be a natural term and hence a determination of a finite entity. Consequently, what is purely sensitive and not intellective is not involved in the order of eternal, infinite things, but pertains totally to the lower order and, confined

<sup>172</sup> The ideological deduction of genera and species was given in *A New Essay*, 2: 646–658. In paragraph 499, I showed that ideologically species was formed *a posteriori* by *universalisation*, and genera by *abstraction*, the process moving from species to genera. What I am saying here gives the ontological explanation of all these things. The eternal Mind, operating as creative cause, proceeds according to an order: it starts from infinite ens and by abstraction mentally produces the *entities* that constitute the supreme genera; it then descends from these to the lower genera and to the species. The supreme genera therefore are first and directly formed by *theosophical abstraction*; the lower genera and species are formed afterwards by means of *determinations* that are added to the abstract entities. We human beings on the other hand, following the ideological path, first find ens already determined, and form species by universalisation; then by abstraction we strip the determinations away from the species to form generic ideas.



within the limits of the finite, is totally and in every respect closed in. Moreover, if that which determines an entity by uniting itself to the entity has the nature of term, the determined entity will have the nature of principle, and because the subjective order consists of the conjunctions of action and experience, the two entities will be joined only by these conjunctions. Consequently, if the entity which constitutes the determination of another entity manifests itself in some active mode, it presupposes, behind it as it were, an active subject which we do not experience. This explains why, in addition to the body, I am compelled to accept the existence of a *corporeal principle*, whatever the active subject might be (PSY, 2: 816–822).

Returning to our human experience, the purely sensitive entity is *per se* undetermined and therefore could not subsist if another entity, uniting itself with it, did not provide the determination of act that it lacks, and thus make it an ens determined in every part.

But the entity which, by making itself a term, makes the sensitive entity determined and hence receptive of existence as an ens, can vary. This variation of the determining entity is the origin of various species of entia, while the *sensitive entity* of all these entia, which is the initial subject of the determination, constitutes *genus*. We see therefore that the *sensitive entity* is present in all animals as principle and constitutes genus; the *corporeal extended* is also present as determining and completing the act of this principle. But because the corporeal extended, which determines the sensitive principle, admits varieties of organisation, we have the various *species* of animals. Here also genus is constituted by the abstract entity, which is to be determined; species are constituted by the various modes in which the abstract entity becomes determined with typical, permanent determinations. These various modes depend on the fact that the determining entity can itself be variously determined.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>173</sup> Here the question arises: 'Can the *abstract sensitive entity* be determined by union with another entity that is different from the corporeal extended?' Even though experience says nothing about the matter, we cannot show it to be impossible. If there were indeed entities different from that of the corporeal extended, and they were capable of constituting the determination that the abstracted sensitive entity lacks, each of them would give rise to *secondary genera* so that the *abstract sensitive entity* would be the

1417. If we now make another abstraction from the sensitive entity and remove the sensitive element, all that remains is a *real entity* without feeling, and this needs a determination. Because we cannot conceive anything outside the three supreme genera (the intellective, the sensitive and the pure real), the pure real can be determined only through its relationship with the first two. However, unable to be determined by the intellective, because this is joined solely to the object and to what is in the object, it must be determined by the sensitive. But relative to the sensitive, the pure real cannot have the nature of principle because a principle is act, and it is precisely the act present in the concept of the sensitive that the mind had to remove in order to find the pure real. Hence, the pure real can have only the concept of term and be determined only as a term of the sensitive. This is precisely what we have seen: when we think reality that lacks both feeling and intellect, corporeal matter has the condition of term (*PSY*, 2: 831–839). We need to see therefore how *pure reality*, in its condition of term, can be determined. We note at once that its determinations must also have the condition of term, and we know only two existing *pure realities*: *space* and *body*. Space, which is the term of every sensitive principle known to us, is determined by its dimensional unlimitedness; body is determined by its dimensional limitation and by the energy manifested in it through the action of the corporeal principle. Material reality considered without these two determinations proper to it is called *corporeal first matter* (*PSY*, 2: 779–801); all bodies take their origin from these terminative determinations.

Hence, in the case of the three abstract entities (the intellective, the sensitive and pure reality), the first two have the condition of principle because they are acts; the third, divided from the other two, can have only the condition of term because there is nothing beyond it of which it could be principle.

foundation of the primary genus. Furthermore, the different generic entities, which would determine it by their union with it, would constitute the foundation of *secondary genera* into which the primary would be divided. Each of these terminative entities would be determined and, being determined, would determine the *sensitive entity* in various modes. Thus each determining entity would give rise to *species* that would have their foundation in the permanent determinations of the determining entity.

1418. The undetermination I was speaking about results from a subject bereft of its act. Without this act, the subject remains undetermined before the mind because it does not show the mind how it may be brought to completion. Unable to subsist on its own in this undetermination, it needs to be united to another entity which, when joined to it, can support it by giving it a determined completion. But after every intellectual and sensitive act has been separated from the subject, the entity remaining before the mind possesses no other entity that can complete and determine it; it is the last entity, whose only property is to serve as term to the acts from which it has been separated. However it is not determined by these acts, which relative to it can have the nature of principle, because only a *term*, not a *principle*, determines; the only thing it receives from these acts is existence, not the determined mode of existence. Moreover, precisely because an entity of this nature that is a pure term admits no other term, it does not require another term, and if it does not require another term, then clearly its undetermination is not caused by the lack of a foreign term — indeed, if the lack caused its *undetermination*, it would require the term and could receive it. Granted therefore that the entity has some undetermination, the undetermination must be an *undetermination of term*, not *of act*, hence an undetermination that is *intrinsic* to the entity as term and not an undetermination relative to some extrinsic entity that completes it. But undetermination *intrinsic* to the *term*-entity is *dimensional undetermination*, which means that only the *undetermination of dimensional quantity* can be in the ultimate entity, which is purely term. This quantity can be understood in two modes: either as *unlimitedness* which, as I said, is proper to the *space-term*, or as *limitation*, which produces *dimensional quantity*, present in bodies. The *size* and *shape* of bodies therefore are ‘*determinations* proper to the term-entity, and also have the nature of term’. But the existence of these two term-entities with their terminal determinations requires the principle which contains them, because the nature of a term is relative to a principle (AMS, 94–129).

Here, we see the origin of the two genera of quantity: *intensive quantity* and *extensive, dimensional quantity*. The first comes from the nature of entities that are understood as *principles*; the second, from the nature of the entity that has a nature

of pure term. If the second is sometimes predicated of the principle, it is solely due to its union with the term that possesses it as proper to it.

1419. Presenting the argument from the beginning therefore, it is the following:

The infinite subject is totally simple and as such is determined in every respect.

The eternal Mind, by an abstraction, separates the intellectual act, the sensitive act and the real entity.

These three entities remain undetermined *in se* before the mind.

Because they are not *in se* determined, they must be determined through union with other realities, which can give them the term of the action proper to them.

The intellectual principle entity has for its other entity, in which it terminates, the object.

The sensitive principle entity has for its other entity, in which it terminates, the real entity.

The real entity cannot have another entity in which it terminates because it itself is an ultimate term. The only way it can be determined as a term is either through its unlimitedness or through its dimensional limitation.

If the *object* is seen as the term of the intellectual principle and joined to this principle as another entity, we understand that both the *object* and the *intellectual principle*, precisely because conceived separately and joined solely as two different natures, have completeness. The object itself, because lacking a subject, certainly cannot have a subjective completeness, but can certainly have an objective completeness, which is simply *virtuality*. By means of this virtuality, it hides from the intellectual principle (which is something other) what it contains within itself as subject. We know however that the intellectual principle that intuits the object (virtual being) understands itself in this being and is also what appears to it as actual and subjective in virtual being (*PSY*, 1: 249–253). Consequently, because the intellectual principle which, as we saw, is essentially sensitive — I am speaking here about feeling in general, whatever it might be, not about an animal feeling — has *in se* a primal and fundamental different feeling, then the being that it intuits shows it what is real. Note carefully: everything real that an ens

perceives in the being it intuitively reduces to the ens' own feeling; an ens feels everything with its own feeling whether this feeling is considered substantial *in se* or considered in its active and passive modifications, which place it in relationship with agents different from itself. Consequently, the quality or quantity of fundamental feeling is strictly speaking what is parcelled up, so to speak, in the virtuality of being, present to each intellect, and makes the fundamental feeling different for each intellect. This is the origin of the different genera and species of intelligent creatures.

1419a. The greater or lesser fundamental feeling possessed by these intellective principles depends on causes of which we have no experience whatsoever. But guided by what experience we have, we can say that our rational nature is constituted by the two following elements of the fundamental feeling: 1. an intellective feeling, which is intuition, because every intellective act is necessarily a subjective feeling; 2. a feeling of corporeal life, whose principle is made one with the intellective, feeling principle, and from this unifying of the principles gives rise to the rational feeling fundamental to us.

If we desire to use this limited data of our experience to posit a general theory about the specific varieties that the different feelings of the intellective principle can have, I would say that these varieties have two origins:

1. The variety arising from a term pertaining to the subjective order, which for human beings is space, the body and the modifications of the living body, and for other entia we do not know, unless the variety perhaps arises also from other terms of subjective or even reciprocal action.

2. The variety arising from an objective term, because we cannot know whether certain intelligences different from man perhaps see being that is not fully virtual or see in being not only their own feeling reality with its active and passive relationships but also other realities shown them by the Creator, in the way that many theologians conceive angelic natures.

However, if such intellectual natures exist, and I will speak about them elsewhere, the objective reality they intuit in objective being could be only something pertaining to the divine Exemplar, where alone reality is *per se* objective. Nevertheless,

we can be certain that this objective reality would fuse an *intellective feeling* with the act of subjective intuition. In this life we would have no experience whatsoever of this intellective feeling, but it would certainly be very powerful and, if we were aware of it, capable of causing very great wonder in us.

We can generally conclude therefore that the lower genera and species of intellective entia depend on the varieties of the fundamental feeling, no matter what causes this variety.

Regarding the lower genera and species in which purely sensitive ens can be separately conceived, our experience is limited to showing that it is determined solely by the term of space and of body. However we could not absolutely affirm that the reduction of *real entity* that has the nature solely of term to space and corporeal matter excludes the existence of another entity, totally unknown to us.

1420. The result therefore of the ontological production of the world is the necessary existence of three *supreme genera* of finite ens: the intellectual, the sensitive and the material or real. According to their order, the first supposes the other two but not as separate from the first, and the second supposes the last. As a result of this order the human mind is accustomed to conceiving some genera that I call *bastard* or *equivocal*. The mind sees the most undetermined of these genera as a foundation of a universal genus of which the three are made lower genera, as if the *genus of reality* divided into intellectual, sensitive and pure real. The sensitive genus is seen as the foundation of a genus that includes below it as lower genera even its superior genus, as if the *genus of animal* included the species of man and brute (cf. *NE*, 2: 655). I call these genera *bastard* or *equivocal* because, although used by philosophers with total certainty, they have an *equivocal foundation*. In fact, when *reality* is taken as the foundation of the three lower genera, we cannot mean *pure reality* because this could not include the sensitive and intellective genera. Reality is therefore taken in an equivocal sense, understood now as pure reality, now as the reality present in what is sensitive, now as the reality present in what is intellective. But these three realities are essentially and totally different, and have only an analogical identity arrived at by the mind. When the mind separates them, it makes them different from what they were when not separated. The only

thing they have in common is that the mind derives one from the other; the mind has made them something else simply by separating them from the undivided and simple whole (which they previously were). When we say, for example, that animals are irrational and rational, we are simply stating a dialectical classification; we are supposing that animals can be rational. But as long as animals are animals, they cannot be rational. The animal can be a dialectical subject of rationality but never a true subject for the reason that the subject of rationality is a rational subject, which can certainly also be animal but not vice versa. Because the first element of an ens is the subject, the first element of a rational ens can be only the principle of rationality; I have in fact already pointed out the defect in the common definition of human being (*AMS*, 24–33). Certainly, in the order of generation the animal becomes rational (cf. *Psychology*), but we must bear in mind that through this addition the subject is no longer the previous subject; it is a new act and a new subject — the word ‘become’ is always a cause of error, as I have noted elsewhere.

We must therefore distinguish between *equivocal genera* and *true, real genera*. The latter has three supreme genera, each of which can have lower genera, provided there is a total diversity of nature in the term.

1421. All this teaching can now be applied to the question that was asked: ‘What does the cause confer on what is caused?’

We have seen the following:

1. The first cause operates by means of abstracting intellect.

2. These abstracts, as containers, that is, as ideas, are a categorical form different from the infinite subject from which they are drawn by the mind’s action, and as content, that is, as essences, differ from the infinite subject through the maximum opposition I have called transcendent.

3. They differ solely because they have been separated by thought from the infinite subject in which they are essentially united and fused into one without division or distinction of any kind. These essences, divided by the mind but united in the subject, are called only equivocally by the same name, and do not have similarity but purely an order of origin.

4. When these abstracts are determined by the mind so

that nothing whatsoever remains undetermined in them, they can be realised.

5. The power to realise them by willing them pertains to a perfect, infinite intellect, because they cannot be fully known *in se* if the intellect with its Word, intending them, does not realise them.

6. The divine intellect can be only perfect. Moreover, because Being is this kind of intellect, its act and term can be only the actuality of subjective being. Hence, if to know them fully existing *in se* is to realise them, then to realise them is to give them the act of subjective being, that is, to create them.

As I say, after seeing the truth of all these logically necessary and interconnected propositions, we can deduce the following consequences in answer to the question:

I. Created nature does not share in any part of God's substance and is totally different from God's nature.

II. Created nature has an order of derivation from the nature of God by means of the divine intellect that creates it.

III. Created nature shares in the *essences* that are drawn by divine abstraction from the subjective nature of God, because created nature is their realisation.

IV. When we say that created nature shares in the qualities and perfections of God, we must understand this participation as indirect, not direct, that is, by means of the abstract essences that the divine mind draws from the subjective nature of God. Hence, these essences participate in God, not in the sense of true participation because, in themselves, they are totally different from the divine nature in which, as multiple, limited and undetermined, they do not exist subjectively. In their place only one essence exists and, as object of the mind, it simply gives the mind the quarry, so to speak, from which it can extract them by abstraction without suffering in any way from this purely mental operation. Such therefore is the indirect participation, attributed to created nature, in the qualities and perfections of God, a participation that means purely an order of derivation, and the only likeness or common element between the deriver and what is derived is abstract.

V. When I say the *likeness* and *common element* is *abstract*, I simply mean that this *abstract* which, no matter how



determined, is realised, that is, made to exist subjectively, has been removed from God's subjective nature by the mind's action. Consequently, the *typical abstract* or idea is presented for the mind's consideration as a middle term between created nature existing subjectively and God's subjective nature. The mind on the one hand sees the abstract in God from whom the mind removes it, and on the other sees and affirms the subjective, created nature in that abstract. It thus conceives, as it were, a *proportion* between created nature and God, with the abstract forming the middle term of this proportion. This constitutes what in Greek is called *analogy* or, as others say, likeness by analogy between creature and creator.

VI. The typical abstract is container and content. As content it is called *essence*, and has a subjective form that is not subsistent on its own but contained; as container and called idea, it is object. We need to investigate therefore the relationship between created nature and the typical abstract as object. It is a relationship of categorical opposition because created nature pertains solely to the subjective form and hence is in maximum opposition to the object. Hence nothing prevents the typical abstract in its form of container-object from being a divine actuality and thus the Exemplar of the world, container of the subjective world. In fact the world in its subsistence is not subjective as contained but simply subjective existing *in se*. Our mind however also considers the world as object, that is, as contained in the object. This subjective world, considered objectively, is the realisation of the object, that is, of the Exemplar; it is the realisation contained in the object. In this way the World truly shares in God because it has the same identical being which the mind sees in two forms, on the one hand as container and objective, and on the other as content and subjective. This being is truly an actuality of God and is God himself. But careful attention is needed here: the world considered in this way is not the world subsistent *in se* outside every container, but the world subsistent in the container. Hence it is not the world we experience; we ourselves are not this world, nor are the agents that operate on our feeling, because all this is outside the container and is what it is because outside the object, and experienced externally. This explains better what I have said,

that the existence of the world is a relative existence. Ignorance of this and the failure to make these distinctions made the solution of pantheism difficult: no one could see how to reconcile the two propositions that 'the World is in God' and 'the World is not God'. The antimony is resolved as soon as we consider that in the two propositions the word 'World' is used equivocally. When we say 'the world is not God', we are speaking about the world in its existence proper to and relative to itself; the proposition is therefore entirely true. When we say 'the World is in God', we are not speaking about the world as existing *in se* with an existence purely relative and proper to itself but the world contained in the eternal object. These two modes of existence of the World have no likeness between them but only a relationship of origin and an analogy. In fact, their being is totally different, and their opposition maximum. Hence the second proposition is also entirely true and does not in any way contradict the first.

1422. All this opens the way to the second point of the discussion. I said that two elements are distinguished in the finite ens existing *in se*: 1. its nature, and 2, the act of subjective being through which it exists. I proposed to investigate 'what is the influence of the first cause on the caused', that is, on the finite ens in regard to both its nature and the act of subjective being. So far we have examined whether the nature of the finite ens is influenced in it by the first cause by an emanation of substance in such a way that the first cause gives something of its own substance to the finite ens which it produces. We found that it was not influenced in this way because, as we have seen, the finite ens in no way participates in the infinite substance but only in what is contained in the finite *essences* abstracted by the divine intellect from infinite, subjective being. We must now see whether the first cause, in creating finite natures by giving them the act of subjective being, through which they exist *in se*, gives them something of itself, that is, of its own subjective being.

First of all, we must recall what I have said so often: 'Finite ens is not its own being.' In this proposition, 'being' can be understood as the *essence* or as the *act of subjective being* that realises that being. The word has both these meanings. In fact, being is common to all essences, and equally common to all

realised finite entia. These two meanings of 'being', the being of essences and the being of finite real things, are founded on the first two forms: objective being and subjective being. *Essence* is contained in objective being, whereas finite real things exist through an act of purely subjective being relative to itself. What then is this being, and does it pertain to the divine nature?

1423. If we seek the origin of this being, we see that essence has its being through that act of the divine intellect that I have called typical abstraction, an act of divine intuition. The act of the divine intellect and its term, that is, essence, is an actuality of God existing from all eternity. But this actuality in God is not distinct from the divine essence; on the contrary it constitutes one, simple and indistinct essence with it; indeed, what God sees in himself is purely and only himself. The distinction made by the divine abstracting mind between one essence and another does not posit any distinction at all in God, as we have seen. The finite essence we contemplate is however something else. We do not contemplate it as if it were ourselves but as something *other*, different from ourselves through categorical opposition. Moreover, we do not see it as an actuality of the divine mind; this actuality that is simultaneously subject and object. On the contrary we see it as a thing on its own, because God, of whom it is an actuality, remains hidden. Hence, separate from God, it cannot be God. Nevertheless, because this essence is presented also to us as object and we clearly understand that no creature can *per se* be object, we see it as something midway between the creature and the creator, a midway entity relative to our mind. We therefore see that this *midway* cannot be such *in se* because nothing can subsist *midway* between the Creator and the creature — we have already seen that a *maximum, transcendent opposition* excludes every midway. We therefore argue directly that this essence which, as an eternal object, does not present us the concept of God, must be an *appurtenance* of God, such that if we saw God, we would at the same time see that it is an actuality of him indistinct from any other divine actuality, indivisible *in se* but divisible through mental abstraction.

The being of the essence in God is therefore the act of the abstracting divine intellect; it is divine actuality, divine essence. But being as essence mentally separate from God, as it is before

our mind, it is an *appurtenance* of God, which as such has only a mental existence, but in so far as it exists *in se*, it ceases to be an appurtenance and is divine being itself.

1424. What then is the subjective being of finite real things? Again, in its origin, it is the act of the divine mind, pertaining to the faculty of the Word, with which the divine mind pronounces that what it intuits in the typical essence be *in se*. Hence this act in God is subjective Being itself which, in pronouncing, creates finite ens. But this act as an act of God is not at all the same as when it is an act of created nature: as an act of God it is absolute being; as an act of the creature it is being relative to the creature. To understand this we need to turn to the consciousness of God as creator and the consciousness of the creature. In God's consciousness the creative act is not distinct from God because God is conscious of creating and this creative act is his own actuality undivided from himself, absolute being. In the consciousness of the creature the act appears as the act with which the creature exists because of its consciousness of existing, but this act of its existing is not something other, it is totally separate from God because God who does it remains hidden. Nor is it the total act that emerges from God but only the term or extreme point, so to speak, of the act, because the creature is precisely term relative to the creative act. At the same time the creature itself is conscious of not being the act in which it exists but of being the creature made to exist through that act. Consequently, it feels it has a necessary relationship to that act as to something other belonging to it, and therefore it is called a relative ens because it exists through this relationship that it has with being. Another consequence is that this act of being appears relative to it, as the act that simply makes it exist in its own nature, a nature that varies and constitutes diverse and different creatures. However, the act of being is always the same for all of these creatures. It does not change or alter the nature of every finite ens, because relative to them all it simply produces the same effect of making each exist. The creature therefore knows its being only in relationship to itself. This being, abstractly considered, is certainly absolute because, as abstractly understood, it is already divided from the creature and therefore no longer the being of the creature. Nevertheless the creature participates in this being purely as

relative to itself, and nothing more. However, the relative and the absolute are not only different, but between them there is also a maximum, transcendent opposition. Hence the creative act, which is God, absolute Being, could in no way whatsoever be the same as the being that is participated in by finite ens. Indeed, the distance between them in identity of being is maximum.

1425. I have said that ontological limitation changes an ens into another, changes one being into another. In the same way, when the being that is joined to the finite natures it actuates is separated by God from these natures — consciousness witnesses that they know the being only in so far as it is joined to them — this being cannot in any way be confused with the creative act or with the actuality of God or with God himself — all these three manners ultimately mean the same.

But someone will object: how do you use the same word ‘being’ for both? Surely they must have something in common if they are to be called by the same word? Moreover, isn’t ‘being’ so simple in concept and meaning that it does not admit even a definition (cf. *Anthropology*); a more universal and clearer concept cannot be found to explain it?

This is indeed true, but when ‘being’ is understood in this naked, isolated way, it is *abstract being*, not subsistent being, or being that makes typical the nature in which it is subsistent. *Abstract being*, as I said earlier when discussing divine abstracts, is a logical mediator between creator and creature, between the first cause and the caused; it is solely in the mind, which predicates this abstract being of both God and the finite ens. But it is precisely this *predication* that changes the meaning of ‘being’ and makes it equivocal. *Abstract being*, before it is predicated, is one and totally simple in the mind, but not in itself. When predicated however, it becomes something else, because the predication of this being relative to infinite ens is different from its predication relative to finite ens. In fact, being is predicated of the infinite Ens with the copulative ‘to be’, thus: ‘The infinite Ens is being’, whereas in the case of a finite ens only the copulative ‘to have’ is used: ‘A finite ens has being’ (cf. *Logica*, 429–430). Predication implies a union between the predicated essence and the thing of which it is predicated. This union, however, differs according to the

nature of the copulative. Predication with the copulative 'to be' implies a union that is more than a simple union, because it is identification. Predication with the copulative 'to have' implies a union that leaves the diversity of the two joined things. Abstract Being therefore identified with the infinite Ens is no longer the abstract being it was before, because it is subsistent *in se*. Abstract being, joined with finite nature, remains the same essence that is thought in the abstract, but has the act of union with finite nature that subsists through this act of union. Hence it is no longer purely *abstract being* but being with an act limited to individual finite natures. We should not be surprised therefore that *abstract being* is common to both God and the creature, in the sense that it can be predicated of both. But we would be surprising if being, after it has been predicated and ceased to be abstract, is a predicate of God that differs from the predicate of the creature: predicated of God, the *essence* seen in abstract being increases and is *in se* completed; predicated of finite nature the essence is not completed and does not *in se* increase, it simply communicates its actuality to finite nature and is limited to this. Consequently, if the essence acquires an actuality, this is not an actuality of the whole essence of being, but an actuality limited by the finite real, because it is relative to this.

1426. The finite ens therefore participates in the essence of being that is intuited in abstract being but not in the substance of subsistent being. But the being in which the finite ens participates has an order of origin with subsistent being because it is from this that it is drawn by the operation of the abstracting mind of God the creator.

Neither of the two elements that compose the finite ens, that is, its *nature* and *subjective being*, is a direct participation in the qualities and perfections subsistent in God; both are mediated by means of the *abstracts* of those qualities and perfections.

But a difference exists between participation in nature and participation in being. *Nature* is participation in everything contained in the *typical abstract* (apart from the possibility of the repetition of the divine pronouncement that produces this participation, also called realisation). Nature is identical in the real which participates and in the typical abstract; only the

categorical form is different, because nature is in the abstract in objective form, and in the real in subjective form, so that the nature that is intuited in the type of the real nature is predicated with the copulative 'to be', as in the statement: 'This real ens is human.' Subjective being does not participate in everything contained in abstract being because this contains the pure essence of being. Although unlimited, this essence participates in as much being as it can receive. Because this quantity is equal to the limitation of the nature that is activated, the essence of being is shared in by all finite natures. The fact that abstract being, although not *in se* divided, can be shared in partially by many finite natures results from what I said, that this participation is not identification. If being identified itself with nature, there could be only one nature (this is the case in God) because being is one. The union is a union of presence, as being always remains something other than the nature participating in it. Consequently, it is predicated of natures solely with the copulative HAS, not IS, as in the statement: 'This human being HAS being.'

#### Article 9

The ontological explanation of 1. the opposites of activity and passivity, and giving and receiving, and 2. of the synthesisism in the subjective order of finite natures, and of their placement

1427. The theory I have given for the origin of finite entia from their cause also contains the ontological explanation of the activity and passivity present in finite ens, and of the law of synthesisism, of which I made great use in *Psychology*, also of the placement of finite natures, which, as I said, support themselves one against the other, and are as it were piled up on top of each other and densely packed in the universe. The synthesisism I am taking about is seen in the subjective order of finite natures, but above this synthesisism there is the first of all synthesisisms: the supreme forms of being.

§1. *The ontological explanation of the opposites of giving and receiving, and activity and passivity, in finite ens*

1428. We have seen that being is one and simple; it cannot in itself be split or divided in any way. But as the mind conceives it, it can be broken down into many parts and, in its subjective form, limited in various ways. This fractured, limited, subjective being does not exist *in se* but, as I said, exists only before the mind and through the mind's operation.

The divine Mind, using its abstracting faculty, at first breaks down its concept of subjective, infinite being into many parts, so to speak. But, by an efficacious act of its practical and volitive intelligence, it also has the power to bestow existence *in se*. For this to happen, each part must not have any undetermination in it; whatever is undetermined cannot exist *in se*, precisely because we do not know what the undetermined is: it can be this or that thing. In addition, one and the same ens cannot exist in two or more exclusive modes, due to the opposition of entitative otherness, which would make an ens contradictory or absurd. God, who is pure intellect, can neither think nor therefore make anything that involves contradiction.

Hence two mental fragments of being, that are undetermined abstractions, cannot receive subsistence unless they first receive the determinations they lack. But because they *in se* lack these determinations, the determinations have to be added from outside. This addition however must not remove the limitation that the individual fragments have as abstract parts of being. Let us see how this could be accomplished.

We have seen that subjective being, as intellective and living, is divided by the mind into three undetermined natures: 1. intellective nature, 2. sensitive nature, and 3. purely real nature. We then saw that the first two have the nature of act and hence of principle. Their undetermination therefore consists in the lack of a term in which the act-principle could be seen to be this act rather than that act, according to the term in which it finishes. Initially the act is undetermined because we cannot see where it ends: it can finish in this or that term. In the case of the third abstract nature, *pure reality*, we saw that it lacked both the intellective and sensitive act, with the result that the only



condition it could have was that of term. Its undetermination therefore, unlike the first two essences, was not the lack of a determined term because it itself is a term, but consisted solely in the fact that it itself as term is undetermined. The only thing therefore that can determine it is something already present in it itself as term. This determining element, considered most generally, has to be the limits enclosing the term. Consequently I said that the determination had to be *quantity*.

We can therefore draw this consequence: the proper, direct *subject of limitation* is solely that essence that has the nature of term. The principle in ens is not limited as such, but receives limitation precisely from the fact that it finishes its act in a quantitatively limited or determined term. Hence, limitation determines the term, and the limited term simultaneously limits and determines the principle.

1429. If the intellective and sensitive principles are separated by the mind by abstracting from their terms, their determination is subject to the following principal conditions:

1. They must be given a determined term.
2. This determined term must not have being identical with the principle to which it is joined. If it had *identical being*, it would simply be a case of restoring to the principle the term removed from it by abstraction, and the result would be the infinite being that it had previously and was mentally divided from it; it would certainly not be a finite ens. Consequently, an indispensable condition for the determination to take place is 1. that the term be added to the principle as another entity that has another act of being proper to itself, and 2. that instead of an identification of being there is simply a *conjunction* of entities that are different *in se*.

Here a question naturally arises: what is this *conjunction* that keeps the two entities (the principle and the term) so separate by nature that the mind can think them as different entia? We must answer that the nature of the conjunction and separation consists in the oppositions of *activity* and *passivity*, of *giving* and *receiving*, that is, of simple presence and of that to which the other is present. This is the ontological origin of these oppositions that can exist only in finite being. In the opposition of giving and receiving, it is indeed true that this opposition is found, so to speak, also in infinite ens, but in a totally different and

more perfect way: what is conceived as giving does not differ in being or nature from what is conceived as receiving. Hence there is no opposition of two natures, as in finite ens; only the relationships remain opposites in an identical being and nature. This is not the opposition I am discussing in the case of finite ens. In infinite ens the opposition of giving and receiving pertains to the *primal oppositions* and to the oppositions of *modal otherness* present between the personal forms, but in the finite, they, or better, the opposition of presentiality pertains to the *categorical* and simultaneously *transcendent opposition* between the finite subject (categorical form) and the ideal object (being).

1430. Our investigation therefore need concern only the two oppositions of *simple presence* and *activity* to see how they are possible in the finite and how they are sufficient to *determine* the finite. The possibility is proved as follows.

A principle is by nature an initial act and hence of an activity which tends to a term. But this activity cannot move forward and thus posit itself as a finite act unless it has a term relative or suitable to it. Thus, the intellectual principle needs a term that is object (otherwise it would not be intellectual), and the sensitive principle needs a term that is sensible, otherwise it would not be sensitive. But as long as the intellectual activity and the sensitive activity have no term, they are an undetermined activity, conceived solely by the mind. Each therefore involves a relationship with a general term, that is, with everything that can be contained in the generic concept of object, and with everything containable in the generic concept of sensible. Hence, if these activities tend with their active tendency towards these generic terms and are therefore undetermined, they are also receptive of many different terms. When the creating mind gives the intellectual principle a term that has the condition of object, the indifferent activity will open up towards this term. This opening up is its *determined act* that constitutes the subject and the determined ens. Similarly, when the creating mind assigns any sensible term to the feeling principle, which is undetermined and indifferent to every sensible entity, the principle will find where to open up its activity and will finish its act in this term, and this act will be the first act, the subject and the determined, sensitive ens. Hence, the reason why the intellectual principle can be determined to many specifically different intellectual

entia is its own universal, undetermined activity. This is how its activity appears before the mind which, by abstraction, has separated the principle from every determined object. The same can be said about the sensitive principle.

1431. This possibility however is evidently not sufficiently explained because someone will say: 'We see from the nature of the indifference assumed by the principle when abstracted from its term, that it must, as a permanent activity, open up to any term relative to it and given to it. Therefore if it is given diverse terms contained in the generic concept with which the principle has a relationship, it must be constituted, through the entic force, in diverse entia. But the difficulty remains: how can it open up to terms that have and retain a nature different from its nature? It would have to exit from itself, which seems absurd.'

To give a general solution to this serious difficulty, we must recall the distinction I made between *what is relative* and *what is absolute*. Every *principle* is a *relative*, and every real principle is an operative relative. The effect of such an operative Relative is not only to accomplish its act, but to produce something different from but relative to itself. Thus, an active principle always involves a term that is something else, as in the case of the constitution of the First Being, as I have explained. The fact that the Principle, as an operative relative, has a term that is also relative and something other than the Principle, results from the nature of an operating Principle. Whether the two relatives have the same nature or a different nature is outside the relationship of the two principles and does not depend on this relationship, because the nature is what is considered as *absolute*, not as relative. The concept of an operative Relative therefore involves the necessity of two relatives without requiring that the absolute nature in which these two relatives are is one rather than two.

Whether the absolute nature in which the relatives are rooted is one or two, certainly cannot be deduced from the simple universal concept of an operative principle. The deduction must be made from the determined nature of the operative principle. If therefore the nature of the Principle or Relative was Being itself, then because Being can be only one, the other relative will also be the same Being in which the two relatives will be seen, one as it were facing the other. On the other hand, if the operative

principle is not being but purely a subjective form of being, then the mind sees that the other extreme of the relationship cannot be present in the nature itself of the principle because the principle has a relative nature, not an absolute nature, since the form of being is a relative of which being itself is the absolute. Thus, the relative that is purely a subjective form and therefore a pure, operative relative, cannot find an opposition or a term in itself as such. In fact such a term cannot be object, which is a form different from the subjective form; it cannot be an operative subjective because this is one of the extremes of the relationship. It must therefore be an operated subjective, that is, a pure real. But in this case it is already another entity different from that of the operative subjective. Hence the relative that is an operative subjective cannot have its co-relative within itself. This co-relative therefore must be another nature different from that of the operative subjective. That the conjunction of these two relative natures is possible is manifest from the nature of the relatives because they reciprocally include each other without being confused and are relatives precisely due to this fact. The whole force of this explanation of the possibility that one nature is joined as term to another nature lies in this: when we say two natures, we are saying two relatives because in our case the natures do not express the absolute but the relative, and each relative is by means of the other; they are therefore naturally joined or joinable by the mind.

If the Relative is therefore in absolute being so that the Relative itself is absolute being, its relative action is carried out within itself, that is, in being, where it produces its co-relative. However, if the Relative is not absolute being but a pure, relative form of being, it cannot, when active, open up its act within itself and produce its co-relative — if it did, it would destroy itself by producing a contradiction within itself, because what is active would at the same time become passive. The co-relative therefore must be given it in another nature.

1432. We can now apply this theory to the two subjective principles, the intellective and the sensitive.

The only co-relative that the intellective subjective principle can have is the object. If the intellective subjective principle is being, it finds within itself, that is, within being, the other co-relative, the object, because being is also in this form. But if

the intellective subjective principle is not being but only has being, it cannot find its term in itself because, if it is not being, it is also not object; it is solely pure subject. Objective being must therefore be *given* to it not only as something other (the co-relative is always this) but as another nature. Indeed, the nature of the pure subjective relative differs totally from the nature of absolute being which is also co-relative, that is, object. Moreover, this object, that is, objective being, cannot be totally a term of the subjective principle: if the object is to be totally term, the subjective principle would, with its activity, have to penetrate all being. But to do this, it must identify being with itself, in which case it would cease to be a pure, subjective relative and become subjective being, that is, infinite Ens, contrary to the hypothesis. Hence, the *conjunction* of the term with a purely relative principle cannot be done by making an *identification* between the absolute in which the co-relative is and the Relative to which it is joined. A difference in nature must therefore remain between the principle and the term.

This diversity of nature means that the purely Relative intellective Principle never has as its term all and totally the other nature, in which is its co-relative term; it has only the relative of the other nature. Furthermore, it is *cause of the relative* of the other nature but not of the other nature that is given it. Thus the intellective principle makes *known* to itself felt things because *knowledge* of them is only the relative of those things, not the things absolutely. The sensitive principle makes pure reality felt because to be felt is the relative of pure reality but not reality considered absolutely.

This clearly shows the difference between the *entic force in infinite ens* and the *entic force in finite ens*. The former posits God in his three Relatives, each of which is identical, absolute being. The latter on the other hand is proper to a purely relative principle which posits itself in its co-relative. But this co-relative is neither nature nor being; it is purely co-relative. Hence both the principle and the term must receive their nature and being from elsewhere in order that the relative principle can find its co-relative term in the other nature and in the being of this nature. This being however is presented to the relative principle in order that this principle can find its term in the being, because the principle itself cannot posit the nature or

being of its term, nor posit this co-relative unless the nature already exists in which it must posit it.

1433. We must now apply everything said so far to the ontological explanation I promised of the oppositions giving and receiving and activity and passivity.

The intellectual principle is a subjective form of being in so far as it is relative to the objective form. Hence its only co-relative is objective being. But the opposition present in the supreme forms of being is not that of activity and passivity because the forms are not and cannot be reciprocally active and passive to each other; their sole relationship is reciprocal *in-existence*. This reciprocal in-existence, considered in its origin, results from the oppositions of giving and receiving. Thus we saw that the eternal Mind, as source-principle of the Triad, gives all its own being, positing it as a personally existing object, and then in and with this object gives its whole self, positing this self as term of its love or volitive, loving and living intellect.

But a finite ens is not being in the three forms; it is simply a limited *subjective form*. Not having being in itself, it must receive it from the First cause. As we saw, this First cause, as Intellect, first produces finite ens as object, which thus remains in the first cause as its actuality. This object contains the essence, that is, the nature of a determined finite ens. The first cause, with the act of its will, pronounces this essence as subjectively existing, and the essence is realised. It is therefore the infinite subject that with the act of its will, which is being, realises subjective finite ens. This is the path of creation: it moves from subject absolute Being to the relative subject by means of the object. It is a species of giving and receiving: the infinite subject is the giver, and the finite essence in the object receives the realisation, the real form of being. The essence in the object acts as support to this real form. This object is being, that is, on the one hand an actuality of absolute Being relative to this Being, but on the other hand relative being in respect to finite ens. In creation therefore there is no action and passive experience but rather giver and receiver. The receiver however is something different from finite ens, because it is essence which is not real finite ens but that to which real finite ens refers. Because essence is a divine actuality, everything realised, existing *in se* as finite, cannot be a divine actuality. Consequently, by means of the act that

pronounces the essence as existing, that is, realised *in se*, an ens must be posited different from God, who is essentially infinite. The same pronouncement, when referred to the essence of being, is the generation of the Word.

1434. However, our concern was not the opposition of giving and receiving possible in the creative act but the opposition possible in the constitution of the intellective finite ens.

This constitution is composed of the intellective principle (a pure Relative) and the object. The relationship of the forms of being, as I have said, can be only of in-existence. Hence between the finite intellective principle (therefore not being but a pure Relative) and the object there will be a relationship not of in-existence but of passive experience and action. This relationship presupposes the opposition of giving and receiving. Because a purely relative subject cannot give itself its own term if the nature of this term is not presented to it from elsewhere, the first Cause, which gives being to this subject, must also give it the nature of the term. This nature is objective being, because the object is never divided from being, which is essentially object, although it cannot manifest being except in an undetermined and virtual mode. Therefore the finite intellective subject is the receiver of the object as intelligible nature; the giver however remains hidden, because it is the Creator. Thus, the relationship of receiving and giving is in the finite intellective ens, but such however that, although there is the receiver and the given, the giver remains hidden. Granted therefore the object as intelligible nature, the receiver-intellective principle receives the object into itself by means of intuition, and is thus the principle of its co-relative term, not of the term in so far as it is absolutely a co-relative, in the way that it is *per se* object, but in so far as a co-relative to itself as a finite intellective principle. Hence, the infinite, absolute subject which, as Principle, produces the object (every object), gives, as Cause, the object to the finite, relative subject, which receives it into itself solely by intuition, which is an act of its entic force.

The principle of finite ens therefore is simply *created*. The term itself however is not only created but *given* to the principle. The created principle *receives* the term as nature, but in the act of receiving it posits it, not as being or as nature, but as its *co-relative*. It is therefore principle of the term as such.

1435. But the term given as nature is posited by the principle in two ways: either by an act that is purely *reception* without action on the term, or with an act that is reception with action on the term. It depends on the nature of the term itself. If, for example, the term has a categorical form different from that of the principle, the act of *reception* cannot involve any action on the term because, as I said, there is no action and experience between the categorical forms, only in-existence or simple presence. This is the case when the term is object, which the term of the intellectual principle is. Thus, relative to the term the only possible act is the *act of reception*.

But what is the difference, we can ask, between the act purely of reception and the act of acting? We must certainly not understand the *act of reception* as a non-act, a thing without action, as if we said metaphorically that a dead thing, a vase for example, receives in itself another dead thing, a liquid. We are dealing with a true act by the receiving principle, an act which, as I argue, I call intuition. Hence, I understand the act of reception to mean the act with which a principle actuates itself in relationship to its term, but does not pass into the term. The effect therefore which the act of reception leaves in the principle that is carrying out the act is an actuality proper to it, through which it has posited itself in relationship to the term — it is the finalised and determined act of the principle.

When however the given term does not differ in categorical form from the principle that receives it, the principle, with the act of receiving the term and positing it as co-relative to itself, acts on and modifies it, and in doing so, gives it a new actuality so that it can be, and hence is, the principle's co-relative.

For object-being to become a co-relative of a finite intellectual principle it must receive some new actuality or modification, because it is *per se* absolutely a co-relative to what is subjective. Hence it does not have to be made such for it to become a co-relative to an individual, finite intellectual principle; it is sufficient that the principle receive it and discover it to be such also for itself.

This is not the case when the nature of the term is pure subjective reality (which is the term proper to a principle that is purely sensitive), because the subjective is not *per se* a co-relative to the subjective. Consequently, this subjective



principle must, when receiving the term, even though the term pertains to the subjective form, operate on it to give it the actuality it lacks so that it can become a co-relative of the subjective principle. This is what I said happens in fact in the conjunction of a corporeal reality to an animal principle (*AMS*, 380–384; *PSY*, 2: 1090–1101; 3: 1785–1798).

1436. Summarising what has been said so far: *to create* is one thing, *to receive* another, and *to act* another.

*To create* is an act of the most perfect Intellect-First Cause, which in the way described abstracts and thinks the typical ideas of finite entia, and realises the *essences* contained in them, a realisation that necessarily follows the willed act through which the eternal intellect freely wills to know them. In this divine operation there is no subject existing *in se* that receives, only a subject in the idea (this also is a work of the divine intellect) that receives the realisation. In so far as the subject of the realisation is in the divine idea, the subject and its realisation are in God; in so far as the real of the essence exists only relative to itself and subjectively, it is finite ens existing *in se*.

*To receive* and *to act* are acts of finite ens. We have seen that in the eternal type of this ens there is necessarily the *composition* of principle and term, both of these distinct in nature. Hence, because such composition is a necessary condition of finite ens, the composition itself is also realised, in real ens.

This real ens pertains solely to the *subjective form*; it is neither being nor objective form nor moral form. In the *subjective ens* therefore the principle and the term are distinguished as separate natures. The term itself can pertain to both the objective and subjective forms of being. If the real subjective principle has as its term being in the objective form, it is by that fact constituted an intelligent subject. Its nature is never confused with the nature of its object-term, but it has by this fact a subjective communication with eternal and divine things. Hence, it does not act in any way on this term; it simply *receives* it.

If the term given to the subjective principle pertains also to the subjective form, then: 1. it *receives* the term, and 2. in the very act of receiving it, *acts* on it and, in its action, modifies and actuates it so as to make it an appropriate term. This union of the principle and the term therefore is not brought about solely by an act of *reception* but with an act of *action on the term*.

In the case of the finite real ens however there is not only

1. *reception*,
2. *reception with a modifying action*, but also
3. *action* without reception, which I have not yet discussed.

1437. Finite ens must first of all be an act that constitutes it a *subject* (as we are speaking generally, the distinction whether it is a complete or incomplete subject, a true or dialectical subject, is not necessary). But a *subject-act* cannot exist in itself without a term, and it cannot have a term unless it is given one. The term is established by the divine mind in the typical essence. The act is therefore posited together with its term, without which the act would be initial, incomplete, undefined; in short, it could not exist. But granted the principle and the term, the principle completes its act in the term, an act of simple reception, or also of action, and subsists as an ens that is one. Whenever therefore the term pertains to a real, subjective form, the principle, when receiving it, acts on it, actuates it for itself, accommodates and unites it to itself, all of which is a consequence of the *entic force*, which I have discussed. This *real term* is another nature, different from that of the principle of which it is term. But a real nature cannot exist without some activity, although the concept of *term* implies that of inertia and passivity. Hence, we must distinguish the following two elements in a nature that constitutes a real term pertaining to the subjective order: 1. the condition of pure term, and 2. an activity, whose subject remains hidden. In fact my analysis of the term of a sense-principle enabled me to distinguish the two concepts in it of pure *matter* and *body* (*PSY*, 1: 212–218; *AMS*, 247–257) and to acknowledge a *force* in the body (*NE*, 2: 882–885) as well as an *extension* in which the force diffuses itself (it is precisely in this extension that the quality of inert term lies). I was also able to explain the existence of this force by admitting a hidden principle which produces the force and which I called *corporeal principle* (*NE*, 2: 855–856). Compelled therefore to acknowledge in the real term a *force* that as such does not have the nature of term, I saw that the *cause* of the union between a principle and its term had to lie precisely in this force, as also did the cause of the mutual actions between the force of the principle and the force manifested in the term. Consequently, ‘the union between the force that resides in the term

and the force present in the principle (a union not of a principle to a principle but of the activity of a principle to a principle) makes the principle capable of exercising an action that finishes in the foreign nature of the term<sup>7</sup>.

1437a. Hence, the principle is never seen in the *real term*, but there is in the term the *activity* of a hidden principle that I call final activity. The fact that a final, subjective activity is united to a subjective principle is not a contradiction because it is simply the union of the divided parts of the subjective activity, which by its nature is one. However, if the final activity of a principle is united to another principle, this does not mean that the principles themselves unite; only the final activity of one is united to the other which, by acquiring the activity's act, is increased by that activity. The real term therefore always remains a different nature from that of the principle, and the final activity manifested in the term, although united to the principle that is first act, nevertheless remains the final activity of another principle that exercises dominion over it as its own final activity. Consequently, the term's nature can be modified by other forces different from the force of the principle whose term it is and which does not have the term under its full control. Indeed, other principles can associate to themselves the final activity present in the term (but always remaining the activity of a hidden principle), and thus a struggle can take place between many principles striving to associate the same activity with themselves, and through this activity make as term for themselves what is already a term constituting another subject. The outcome is an action and experience between principles mutually striving to unite to themselves the final activity of a hidden principle, and so acquire a term. Hence the final activity and the term in which it is present are passive to each principle fighting over them. The principles themselves are also passive to each other, not directly but through the term, which each principle wants to seize for itself and remove from the others.

1437b. Hence, for a non-intellective subject-ens to exist, a principle and a real term must be given, and the real term is given by the final activity present in the nature of the term. The term is joined to the principle when the *activity* present in the nature of the term extends to the principle in such a way that the principle can appropriate the activity to itself. Once the

principle has appropriated the final activity, it extends its act to the term by means of the activity and in this way terminates. The ens, constituted a principle-term, uses the entic force to keep for itself the nature of the term, acting in the nature and conforming it to its own laws. This explains how the sensitive principle has power to move the body. In moving it, it uses the *final activity* which is in the body and which becomes its own because the activity is now joined to it, the principle. We also have the explanation of the laws of the life and sensuous instincts which I explained in the second book of *Anthropology* [AMS, 367–494] and the last book of *Psychology* [PSY, 3: 1781–1821]. The term itself however is subject to modifications. These take place whenever the nature of a term comes into contact with another term — by contact I mean the union of the final force in one term with the final force in another term. This union gives rise to struggle. If the principles that were in the terms have only the first act that terminates in corporeal extension, they unite into one. But in the case of principles that have in addition acts of stimulation and harmonic organisation, the struggle is between the activities of the principles, each of which seeks to conform the extended term in its own way, according to the laws of its activity, and to move it with internal movements and organise it for itself. The principle that triumphs deprives the other principle of its stimulated, organic term.

1438. We can now sum up:

1. The concept of action and passive experience arises from the relationship between the principle and a term of a different nature from the principle.

2. The manner of action which consists solely in *reception* takes place when the nature of the term is such that the nature is *per se term* and need only be received in order to be term — this applies solely to an impassible, immovable term. *Objective being* which informs the intellectual principle is of this kind. — The subjective term of pure extension is also immovable and impassible, but I will discuss this later.

This manner of action concerning objective being (whether the action is *intuition* or any other intellectual operation) is certainly caused by the presence of the term essentially such, but does not pass into the term; it finishes in the subject. For this

reason I call it *intransitive action*, which simply produces in the subject an *actuality* proper to the action.

3. The manner of action that is simultaneously *reception* and *modifying action* is an action of a principle that not only receives the term but *modifies* it so that it can fully receive it and join it to itself. — This action takes place when the *nature* of the term, different from the nature of the principle, is not *per se* term but must be made term by the principle through a modification which the principle impresses on the nature; in other words, it is made term through an actuality that the principle gives to the nature so that this can totally be its term.

An example is the union of the *sensitive principle* with its *corporeal term*, a union I have analysed above.

1439. Different modes of action and experience result from this analysis:

a) In the corporeal term two elements are noticeable: 1. force, that is, cause of motion, and 2. extension (cf. *NE*, 2: 750–753, 871; 3: 136). Strictly speaking, *force* does not have the nature of a pure term because it is an activity, and every activity is proper to principles. Moreover, this force, manifested in a body, does not manifest the subject-principle to which it can pertain. Nevertheless this principle that remains hidden must be there. I have called it *corporeal principle* (cf. *NE*, 2: 855), and the force appearing in bodies I have called *final activity*. This is the activity in which the action of a principle finishes without exiting from itself. Activity and activity are not opposite concepts. Consequently, ‘if there is no impediment, an activity is capable of uniting itself and building itself up with another subjective activity’. From this metaphysical dignity I deduced the unification of principles (*PSY*, 1: 667, 180–203). Hence the *final activity* which is in bodies and draws its origin from the corporeal principle as from a hidden subject, unites with the sensitive principle through an act of this principle, which appropriates the sensitive principle to itself and makes it term for itself, that is, feelable (*PSY*, 1: 291–298). The union of body and soul therefore consists in this: the final activity that is in bodies is given to the sensitive principle as the continuation of the principle; the act of the principle, terminating in the final activity, appropriates this activity to itself and makes it its felt. This union constitutes an *animate ens*.

Here we must carefully note that relative to this final activity the sensitive principle makes the activity *its felt*. As a result, the *felt* is distinguished from the activity as a *feelable phenomenon* added to the activity. The *extension* with which the final activity is thus vested pertains to this phenomenon that is understood as pure term. This final activity, in so far as extended, is in fact truly a sensible term, and thus has the condition of something inert, which is the condition of the term as pure term.

This is *entic action*, constitutive of the corporeal sensitive principle. Determined by the creative act, it cannot be totally annihilated by any finite force whatsoever (*PSY*, 1: 663–669).

b) The sensitive principle is therefore constituted an ens in its term by having united and appropriated to itself the final activity. With this activity in its power, it can produce, within certain limits, movements both in its body and in external bodies connected to its body, as I explained in *Psychology* (1: 288–305; 3: 1813–1821). I call this generally *motor action of the animal*. It is distinguished in the different kinds I listed in the last volume of *Psychology* [3: 1806–1812] and is distinguished from the animal's *entic action* from which, however, it draws its first origin.

Note: this *motor action* is pure action, not reception as well. It differs from the action which, as I said, is a *reception with modifying action*. Reception with modifying action is proper solely to the act with which the sensitive principle receives the nature of the term, modifying the nature and appropriating it to itself.

c) In these two kinds of action of the sensitive principle, *passivity* begins to appear. In both, the term is modified by the principle: in the first kind, it is made sensible and vested with extension; in the second, it is moved and modified not in itself but in its relationship with space.

The following therefore are the first two genera of passivity seen in nature, and both pertain to the term of the sensitive principle:

1. Passivity of the final activity manifesting itself in bodies, which consists in being made a sensible extension — sentimentation.

2. Passivity of being moved — mobilisation.

A

*Sentimentation of corporeal reality*

1440. *Sentimentation* is founded on the following principles:

1. Our mind distinguishes corporeal matter from ourselves and from our principle, which feels it. Corporeal matter therefore is an entity different from us and from the feeling principle.

2. But our material, extended body is, in its own way, *feelable* by us. This sensibility must be something of ourselves because only our own feeling is feelable by us (*PSY*, 1: 281, 316). There are therefore two elements felt in the body, one which does not depend on us, I call it *pure reality*, while the other, which is dependent on us as the *proper* term of the sensitive principle, is the extended felt element in so far as an extended felt.

3. But these two elements are inseparably joined because the *extended felt* is reality which the understanding considers by abstracting from sensibility, that is, not with the relationship of felt but as something existing *in se*. How can this be?

We need to explain two things: 1. how the sensitive principle apprehends a thing that does not pertain to its nature, and 2. how this thing can be made sensible by the sensitive principle.

1441. I will try to reply carefully to these two questions, and begin by asking: 'What is corporeal matter as presented to our thought which thinks it absolutely and not as felt?'

As we have seen, a subject-principle cannot exist *in se* with an act that is only initial, without a term; it must have a term. If we suppose that this subject-ens has a term within itself, the nature of the term does not differ from the nature of the principle, but constitutes one nature with it. The entic action of the principle which constitutes itself as ens is therefore one of those actions I have called *intransitive* because they effect nothing in another nature; they simply produce an actuality in the subject, and with this actuality the subject is posited as an ens and perfected. This happens in God, the most perfect ens. In him his two personal terms have an identical nature with their source principle. Let us suppose that the same or something similar can happen in

finite entia, especially in entia that enjoy an excellent state, for example, in spirits or in some of them. Because they are finite entia, the proper term, the term of their entic action, would be a finite term, a term however in their own nature, not a different nature. This term could not separate itself from the principle and exist on its own. However, relative to another ens that perceives it, it could appear as separate. We have seen that an ens is split into parts by divine abstraction; intellective entia also split it into parts through abstraction, and not only through *abstraction*, which would be simply a partial thought, but through *perceptions* which, relative to the perceiving ens, have the nature of perfect thought (*Sistema*, 75–76; *NE*, 3: 1431–1436). The same happens in the order of feeling relative to the feeling ens. Whatever takes place in feeling is, for the person who feels, separate from whatever does not take place in feeling, and for the person who perceives, whatever takes place in perception is separate from whatever does not take place in perception. The separation is a relative separation that does not apply to the thing felt or understood when this is considered an absolute subject and not felt or understood. If therefore that which forms the proper, non-foreign term<sup>174</sup> of a subject-ens is felt by another ens without this other ens feeling the principle-ens to which the term pertains, and if the term, after being felt, is also understood, that is, perceived as felt, then the term, relative to the person who feels and perceives it, remains separate and becomes a thing on its own, an entity that has no visible principle. This is precisely what happens in the case of corporeal matter when considered not as felt but in itself, as an entity having its own existence. We have therefore the ontological definition of corporeal matter

<sup>174</sup> The concept ‘foreign’ is relative, that is, relative to the nature or subject to which we say a thing is foreign. Therefore ‘foreign’ has meanings of different effect. When I say that a term is *foreign*, the word refers to the *principle* of the ens, not to the whole ens. The human body is not foreign to the ens ‘man’ but to the rational principle, because the body is not a product of the entic force of this principle. On the other hand, we can say that motor force is foreign to a moved body. This is the sense in which S. D. Poisson excellently defined the word ‘foreign’ in his *Traité de Mécanique*, n. 2: ‘We always acknowledge that this change (from the state of rest to the state of movement) is due to the action of a *foreign* cause, etc., without which we conceive that this body could in any case exist.’\*



that reveals to us, so to speak, what is most mysterious about matter:

‘Corporeal matter is the term (we shall see later that it is not a totally quiescent term but retains something of the principle’s activity) of a principle-ens (corporeal principle), and is felt and perceived on its own, separate from its own principle.’

1442. More mysterious still is the obscurity and unintelligibility of this entity called *corporeal matter*. We must investigate in what this obscurity consists.

Our knowledge of any ens whatsoever has two levels.

At the first level we know the *existence* of the ens — I mean both its possible existence through the idea that we intuit of it, and its subsistence by means of affirmation. For example, whenever we have a new sensation, we must say: ‘An ens exists, that is, a cause that has produced the sensation.’

At the second level we also know the *intrinsic conditions of the existence in se of the ens*. These intrinsic conditions are the constitutive parts of the essence of the ens *in se*. If we knew one or several of these parts and not the others, we would have sufficient to be able to say: ‘There is an ens here’, but because the parts we see do not give all the required conditions for the ens to exist as an ens, the mode of its existence and its nature remain hidden from us; in other words, certain intrinsic conditions are lacking, or some are, without which the ens cannot exist *in se*. We know that it exists, not because we truly know the ens *in se* but because there is some indication that makes us argue to it, (cf. *NE*, 2: 620; 3: 1454). We have before us therefore an antinomy, which can be expressed by the following two propositions:

It is an ens because it acts on me.

It is not an ens because it lacks what is necessary for it to be an ens.

However, we can solve the antinomy by correcting the first proposition and making one proposition out of the two: ‘What I feel or perceive justifies my conclusion that an ens exists. I am bound to consider it an ens because it appears to me as existing on its own. But this consideration is a dialectical consideration by which I give the form of ens to what is not such *in se*; it must therefore be an appurtenance of an ens hidden from me.’

Hence an ens, that is, what we take for an ens, can as such have two kinds of obscurity or unintelligibility:

1. It can be intelligible in such a way that it does not itself have any intelligible light which makes its existence known. This obscurity is common to all *finite entia* that *in se* are only real form, not being. And because only being is intelligible *per se*, all finite entia need ideas in order to be made intelligible.

2. An ens can also be intelligible when seen in the idea that manifests its existence, even though it may not have *in se* the intrinsic conditions through which it can exist *in se*. In this case it appears as a rudiment of ens, not as an ens: we understand that it exists but how it exists still remains hidden.

Only entia that are subject-principles with their term have the second level of intelligibility, although they lack the first level if they are finite. But the term separated from the principle has both levels of intelligibility. This explains the obscurity of corporeal matter, which is precisely a term separated from the principle.

Someone may ask whether the principle separated from the term is subject to the same double obscurity. But this cannot be; the principle cannot be separated from the term by means of feeling or perception because it not does occur as separate in our feeling. We can think it as separate only by abstraction; and when in fact we separate it, we have first known it as finalised in its term.

1443. I now reply to the two questions we have asked. The first was: 'How does the sensitive principle apprehend a thing that does not pertain to its nature?'

To understand this we must bear in mind that the concept of principle is totally undetermined, as long as it is thought as lacking every term. It is therefore universal and can be determined by anything that has the nature of term. It is not contradictory that in a nature that presents the concept of *principle* in general the principle should receive any term. A principle is indifferent to every terminative nature, and principles, considered solely on their own, that is, lacking all relationship with terms, do not have any difference.

This indifference of the principle in general to every term whatsoever is confirmed when we consider how the multiplication of principles and terms takes place. As we have seen, this multiplication is the work of an eternal intellect exercising a divine abstraction on the essence of infinite Being which is

itself. Infinite Being is a perfect principle that has a perfect term. A perfect term eminently contains everything that can have the nature of term. Hence, the perfect, absolute principle attains with its act every terminative nature. By abstraction certain activities can be divided as principles from the principle which finishes its act in everything that has a terminative nature. In this case, the abstracting Intellect is free to allow these principles to preserve the power to terminate in any of the special terms that have been divided by abstraction and separated from the absolute term that embraces everything. No difficulty therefore remains in conceiving that a principle can have as its term any terminative entity whatsoever, even though this entity is the term, the *final activity*, of another principle. I call 'final activity' the term that is proper to a principle and does not constitute another nature different from the principle's nature but simply constitutes one of the principle's actualities.

1444. We come now to the second question: 'How can a foreign nature be made sensible by a sensitive principle which is not the natural and proper principle of that nature?'

If this happens, the sensitive principle that makes the foreign nature its term must have a double feeling, that is:

1. it must feel the nature as another nature, which it is unable to totally penetrate to make the nature totally its own, to convert it into a pure actuality of itself, and

2. it must nevertheless feel the nature through a relationship of feeling with itself, so that its own feeling, that is, its own subjective actuality, expands, as it were, over the nature, enveloping and containing it in itself.

These two facts are verified precisely in the sense-perception of our body and are even more distinct in the sense-perception of bodies external to ours. Indeed verification by observation of these two facts confirms the theory.

To explain this fact we must consider what a *terminative nature* is which in itself is unlimited, and what happens to it when abstraction is exercised upon it. We should remember that a *terminative nature* is essentially *relative* to a principle, whether this is sensitive or intellective or both, so that the nature is *per se felt* and *understood*. When abstraction strips it of the quality of *being understood*, it remains of course before our mind as simply *felt*. When it is also stripped of the quality of

being felt, it remains like a perfectly obscure entity, *pure reality*, as I call it, of which one kind at least is *corporeal matter*. *Pure reality* as such does not and cannot come under any sense-perception, and therefore much less under intellectual perception. Consequently we have no proof at all that it exists on its own; we deduce it from our felt through abstraction alone, as something foreign enclosed within our felt. We must not delude ourselves, believing we are thinking of a body shut up in some box a long way from our senses, because in fact we are thinking of the body only as a reality already felt by us, in short, of a body vested with sensations. If we had been deprived of the sensations, we could not think of the body inside the box. Berkeley's defective observation of this fact caused him to define a body as a group of sensations, and consequently deny its reality. The truth, however, is that there is the reality but always enveloped in feeling and impossible to separate from feeling.

If the concept of principle is general and still not determined, it has a relationship with everything that has a terminative nature and determines it. Hence, we should not be surprised that it can terminate in corporeal reality. All we need to know is *how* it can terminate in this reality. Because the sensitive principle, like every real principle, lives and therefore feels, all its activity must be sensible, that is, felt, from the very *beginning* of the act up to the *final activity*, which is the ultimate extreme of the act of feeling. If the sensitive principle cannot issue into act unless it has been given an internal term on which to exercise its activity, this term must either make it do so through the force of the term's own nature, or cannot make it do so but only modify it by operating on it. In fact, in order that all the activity proper to a human being may open out, the activity needs some matter on which it can operate, otherwise it remains constricted and inert. This is because the sensitive principle, as principle, is a pure relative entity; it is not being. Hence, in the act of opening out, it can produce only something relative to itself, which is the felt. But because the animal sensitive principle does not have the *felt* within itself, it must operate by opening out into another nature that is capable of becoming its felt. It cannot produce this nature either by itself, because purely as a beginning of the act it does not have the nature, or from nothing, because, since it is

not being, it cannot give being to anything. The only thing that can be given it is another nature, which due to its condition is terminative, and by operating on this nature, it can produce what is relative to itself, that is, the felt. The felt therefore, produced in material reality by the sensitive principle, is not material reality itself but the feeling that the feeling principle produces in it. Because this feeling, as pure feeling, is of the same nature as the principle, I call it subjective. As relative however, it supposes something existing *in se* absolutely, and this something is pure reality, which is never felt when stripped of everything (it would be the same as saying it is felt and not felt), but is felt as a base, that is, as a necessary condition of feeling; it is what I call material or *corporeal substance*. This material or corporeal substance is simply the matter on which the feeling principle operates and, in operating, completes its essentially sensible act by producing the act at its final stage which is the felt. In fact, the act of felt, when finalised, must be the felt because the felt is what remains after the act of feeling has been fully accomplished and, thus accomplished, continues on. But because what does this act is a relative, and a relative can be accomplished only in the absolute, the absolute (in our case pure reality) must be given to the sensitive principle so that it (the absolute) can accomplish the relative, that is, the felt, in the principle.

1445. But this presents a difficulty: 'You say that pure reality must be given to the sensitive principle in order that this principle can do the act that is directed to producing in pure reality the felt relative. Reality is therefore given to it prior to the felt it produces in the reality. But how can reality be given to it? Can the sensitive principle have reality if it does not feel it?'

The sensitive principle, as principle, is also a relative. It must consequently possess its absolute reality in which the principle is, as indivisible and contemporary with it — I said earlier that the sensitive principle is more than pure reality, which it contains, just as the intellective principle is more than sensitive, which it contains not separately but unified in it. If the sensitive principle is also reality (every reality is a principle or term), then it is not surprising that another reality is joined to and continuous with it; every finite reality is, as such, capable of being continuous with another reality. This conjunction of the

corporeal reality with the reality of the sensitive principle therefore precedes logically (certainly not chronologically) the act of the sensitive principle. By this act the sensitive principle produces the felt in the corporeal reality and so becomes a subject through the entic force.

In fact the nature of knowledge leads us to a similar result. An analysis of the understood, the felt and the pure real shows that the real is contained in the *felt*, and the felt is contained in the *understood*. Therefore the understood is the largest container, containing the other two entities but in its own way; the felt is a larger container than pure reality, which it contains in its own way, and the pure reality never exists on its own, never outside its containers (*PSY*, 1: 256–263, 75 ss.).

1446. I think we have now moved the explanation of *sentimentation* further forward. The *corporeal felt* does not present solely the qualities of a terminative nature, which is *per se* inert and in a sense passive, it also presents active phenomena, as we see in the impenetrability of bodies and in the communication of motion, which are clear indications of the existence of a force. I have therefore acknowledged in *corporeal reality* a *final activity* that does not pertain to us. Every activity requires a subject or principle that can perform the activity, because the subject is what is first in every ens; we cannot conceive the existence of what is second without admitting the existence of what is first. The necessity of following reason led me to conclude that the *activity* I called *final*, which is not a principle nor shows the total principle in itself, has a subject hidden from us, which I called ‘corporeal principle’, and which could be only a pure spirit. The *final activity* of this spirit, therefore, must unite itself with the sensitive principle as the term of this principle in so far as the term is real, and must constitute the body of the sensitive principle, and in doing this produces the animate or animal. In fact, our body seems to us to be a pure, unfelt reality, which we envelop with own sensitive act and thus produce in it our felt. But the reality *in se* appears to us to be pure, unfelt reality, like a kind of substrate of our felt, and therefore not totally penetrated and made felt by our act of feeling, precisely because we do not share in the sensitive life of its own principle. Hence, what for us is pure, unfelt reality because it is an activity divided from its living principle, cannot be such for its own principle,

which is a living subject; relative to its principle, it is a sensible *proper* activity of its feeling. Similarly therefore, the activity is not given as a foreign nature to the principle but is produced by the principle using its entic force. It thus has within itself its own felt or term, which would be its own final activity. I repeat therefore: what for us is a *terminative pure reality*, is, for the pure spirit under discussion, a *final activity*, a term that is foreign to us but proper to the pure spirit. Hence, this *entity* that has two different relationships, one with pure spirit, the other with sensitive souls, is the foundation of the connection and of the path of communication between pure spirits and spirits vested with a body — spirits vested with a body are precisely constituted such by the final activity of pure spirits.

This ontological theory of *sentimentation*, which is also that of elementary *animation*, also explains why in the perfect fundamental feeling, the animal (let us say the human being in so far as animal) feels no *passivity* at all from the body, although it *receives* the reality which it makes itself feel. This is because it receives the reality in so far as real, prior (in the logical order) to sentimentation; it receives it as a reality that it lacks, in which it can finalise its act, not by action and experience but by simple conjunction, that is, continuation of its own reality. Once the animal possesses the reality, it opens out and completes its act in the reality, making itself feel it. This is activity, not yet passivity; passivity begins through it, we can say, when it finds obstacles to the opening out of its natural act.

1447. Summarising: there are two elements in the bodies we feel and perceive. One is extrasubjective: this is *pure reality* which has no existence on its own although conceived by our mind as existing *in se* and made into the ens we call *matter*. The other is subjective: this is the relationship of felt produced by the feeling principle in the felt. The feeling posited in it is the *subjective term*; it is the relative of the sensitive principle, that is, its *final activity*. This activity does not originate from itself but through the acquisition of a foreign reality, nor is it totally on its own in this life because underlying this sensible, final activity there must be matter as a kind of substratum, for the reasons given.

These two elements of the corporeal felt can be easily distinguished. If we do not feel a passivity in us in our animation, or

certainly if we cannot observe it because we seem to feel ourselves in it, nevertheless many other phenomena of corporeal sensitivity reveal the extrasubjective force or reality foreign to us. I mean all the phenomena in which our feeling principle suffers and struggles, or the phenomena in which we observe a struggle between bodies that is independent of our principle's activity.

1448. We now come to the special consideration of extension, which is certainly involved in the sentimentation of bodies. Is pure space perhaps involved? Does it also present the phenomena of a struggle with the sensitive principle, a struggle that may manifest a foreign nature and force?

Pure space is present to us as a term of the sensitive principle. But it gives no sign of change or opposition to the principle. We have no proof therefore to make us admit that it is or contains a foreign force. Similarly the animal principle cannot exercise any action on space; its union with space does not give it a new force or energy. Space is where its act ends and comes to rest, without any further act, as in the case of the corporeal force which the sensitive principle acquires through its union with the body. I have also shown that a sensitive principle is never disunited from space as from its term (*Anthropology, Psychology* [1: 554–559]), and that pure space is so simple that it is an *identical term* for every sensitive principle. From this I concluded that if sensitive principles had no other term, they could not be differentiated or multiplied; there could be only one sensitive principle, not many (*Psychology*). I also concluded that the sensitive principle of space is prior to animal principles, that all these animal principles are rooted in it and are individuated by emerging from it through the activity they unfold when given terms proper to them. We must also add that there is no animal feeling which is not contained in extension. This led me to define space as 'a mode of the fundamental or animal feeling' (*New Essay*).

1449. Taking all this into account, I have been led to the following ontological theory of space.

1. *Pure space* is the natural, not the foreign, term of the sensitive principle. It is the *end of its activity*, which spends itself in it. I therefore call it the *quiescent term*, although its activity begins again when corporeal matter is added. We must also note that it is very difficult to form the correct concept of



*pure space* because we must prescind from all bodies and movements, ignore limits and determined places, and even forget our own body. The phenomenon of space that remains after this will seem to many people to be nothing. But this is a mistake because a subtraction does not leave nothing if what is subtracted is less than that from which it is subtracted. We have subtracted only bodies from the phenomenon and total apprehension; space therefore must be left. But this phenomenon of the remainder, space, does not lend itself to the imagination, which is only of bodies, nor can any measure be applied to it, because all measure is posterior to it. Nevertheless, compared to the space measured and distinguished by means of bodies, it is something that seems to be a potential space. The thing that makes it difficult for us to understand that space is not something separate from the principle but a natural appurtenance of it, its finalisation, is that our mind is always led to think the space that already vests foreign and internal reality, whereas we must prescind from this reality and conceive pure space. Only then will we understand that it is nothing *per se* external but very much united to the principle feeling it. Furthermore, we need to reflect that we ourselves are not the principle of space; we are rational principles. Hence it is no surprise that space appears to us as something different from us. Nor is the pure animal the principle of space, but the principle is in the animal as genus is in species. Thus the animal, as species and individual, must feel something in space given as a generic nature to the animal, not something which it itself produces as animator-principle of the body.

I therefore distinguish three things: 1. an *end of the activity*, a quiescent term; 2. a *final activity*, a term which retains life from the activity of the principle, and 3. a *foreign term* which can be only an active, never a quiescent, term.

Consequently, space, relative to the sensitive principle, has the concept of end of its activity, where the activity becomes quiescent having reached its extreme and is therefore the term proper to the sensitive principle and distinguishable from it only by *hypothetical abstraction*. This activity could never constitute the real *foreign term* of a principle of another nature precisely because the sole activity it retains is that of its principle

which finishes in it. On the other hand the *final activity*, in addition to being the *proper term* of its principle, can become the *foreign term* of a principle of another nature because it has activity and reality, also an abstraction made by the principle from whose act it proceeds. Hence, it cannot be continuous with the reality of another principle and add something of its power to that principle. Not every proper term can become the foreign term of another principle, but only the term that is a *final activity*, not the term that is purely an *end of activity* which, separated from its principle, offers our mind only a negative, relative concept.

1450. 2. The sensitive principle is therefore first constituted a subject-ens by its entic force terminating in pure space; this is its primal form. But the sensitive principle in this form is a *real undetermined*. By 'real undetermined' I do not mean something undetermined in itself, because nothing real can exist that is undetermined; I mean a *relative undetermined*, that is, compared with other real things, such as (in our case) animator-principles of matter. The *real undetermined* is therefore simply a *real genus* which, although *in se* not without undetermination, exists identical (with other differences) in other real things. A second final term is therefore added to the principle constituted in this way. This term is *corporeal matter*, and is that which specifies the term as animator principle. The foreign reality unites to the principle of space as its term and must make it its term by *imparting feeling to it*, because the only term the sensitive principle can have is the *felt*; hence the first felt thing it produces in this term is space. Because space is the end of its activity and is its primal form, it cannot feel what is not in space. The fact that the *foreign reality* that is made term of the sensitive principle, is extended, results from sentimentation, that is, from the act of the principle of space. The principle is obliged to feel in space everything it feels, because space is the end of its activity. This first corporeal term constitutes the body of what is animate. The amount of space this term occupies depends on the number of its atoms, but the size of the atom, whatever it is, certainly depends on the intimate laws governing the activity of the sensitive principle of space relative to the quantity of reality in the atom. The first corporeal extension is to be attributed to this relationship between the quantity (which we can call

intensive) of corporeal reality and the comparative quantity of extension with which the sensitive principle vests the reality. But we need to recall here precisely that the *absolute extension* of a body is not knowable; on the contrary it does not even exist; only *relative extension* exists between bodies and between atoms — the connection between the extension of a body (relative extension) and that of pure space (absolute extension) is unmeasurable. Indeed, not only is the *maximum measure* lacking, applicable to limited extension, but also the *minimum measure*, because there is no absolute minimum of extension that can be used to measure the extension of bodies.

1451. 3. The extension felt in the body by a sensible touch, which differentiates the extension from empty space, is the work of the sensitive principle which has space as its essential term. The extension is the produced, extended felt, which contains a foreign reality as *substratum*. This fact is the origin of the concept of *substratum* frequently used by the ancients, and incorrectly extended by them to all substances including spiritual substances. It is this foreign reality contained in our felt that explains why the corporeal, felt term appears to be double, that is, subjective and extrasubjective. Consequently, the same extension presents itself as double, one is subjective, pertaining to the *felt*, our thing, that is, the thing of the feeling subject; the other is extrasubjective, pertaining to the *material body* (*New Essay*), something diverse from the feeling subject. However, although we divide it by thetical abstraction from this subject, it presents itself to us as existing only as a foreign element in feeling. The subjective extension is also called *internal extension*; the extrasubjective, *external* (*Anthropology*).

We have then the origin of that wonderful phenomenon called *external world*, I mean the external world we observe and feel. In fact, if we can rise to removing from our mind the images of bodies and keep only pure space, and give our attention solely to this, we will persuade ourselves that we would not even think of saying that space was something external rather than internal; the distinction would not exist for us. Instead we would conceive pure space united to ourselves as our pure feeling that constitutes us; we would not think any movement, nor the possibility or impossibility of any movement. But when we add another term, that is, a body, to space, new kinds of

phenomena manifest themselves. On the one hand, this new reality given to the sensitive principle cannot be the term of this principle if the principle does not make itself feel the reality; on the other, it cannot make itself feel the reality totally because this is a foreign reality which cannot pertain totally to it. But the felt part and the non-felt part are indivisible:<sup>175</sup> the former comes from the sensible action which the sensitive principle performs on this foreign felt; the latter comes from the foreign principle to which the reality properly pertains and which administers and, as it were, hands over the reality to the sensitive principle. The felt therefore contains a foreign, non-felt element. The feeling entity, although unable to feel this non-felt element as a felt nature, nevertheless feels its existence as a refractory, opposing nature. But the first law of a feeling entity is to give extension to what it feels. It therefore vests both the felt and the different, refractory nature with the same extension. In so far as a felt nature is thus found vested with extension, the feeling entity acknowledges the extension in its own feelings, that is, in its felt elements; in so far as the same extension vests the nature which it feels as refractory and contained in its felt

<sup>175</sup> That something *not felt* but only *perceived in the felt* remains in corporeal reality, which is the term of a sensitive principle, can be conceived in two ways: 1. we can suppose that the sensitive principle feels only the surface of every atom, in which case the interior of the atom would remain not felt but nevertheless determined by the felt surfaces and the energy revealed in these; 2. we can suppose that the whole atom is felt but a *hidden energy* remains in it, which, when it manifests itself, is resistant to penetration by the feeling (essential pleasure) and combats it (which is the origin of pain), or shows itself active in the continuity of many atoms. In many places I have adhered to this second hypothesis, although the first seems to conform more to the popular idea, because corporeal substance is always taken to be without feeling and totally hidden. The first hypothesis can also be supported by the analogy of *surface sensations*, a fact most worthy of our attention and I discussed in *Anthropology*. But on the contrary, we have no certainty of anything that shows us a solid feeling, because even if we had the sensation of only the surfaces of the atoms, the atoms would still give us the phenomenon of solidity, simply because it is impossible for us to advert to the very minute intervals left by such countless feelings gathered into one. Hence the certain fact of the surface sensation shows at least the possibility of having a feeling of solidity, and confirms that *extension* is produced by a simple principle. Indeed a surface that has nothing corporeal in it cannot exist on its own.

but resisting sentimentation, it has the feeling, that is, the *perception* of an external world. This world, which is different from its own feeling, does not exist solely through the act of feeling but exists in the felt by means of some other cause that differs from the cause of its own feeling.

1452. This explains why on the one hand it seems that the soul is in the body, and on the other the body is in the soul. If we accept reality as felt, it cannot but be in the soul, but if we consider reality as something different from feeling and unable to penetrate feeling, it seems that reality itself, like a subject (and it is only a dialectical subject), receives feeling and therefore the soul. This led Aristotle to say that the soul was an act of the body, as if the body were the subject of this act.

This also explains the great confusion among philosophers, particularly modern philosophers, in their search for the communication between the soul they considered internal and having all feeling in itself, and the external world they considered as reality existing *in se* and not felt. They did not see that 1. the non-felt external world, taken by itself as outside feeling, was a pure abstraction; 2. the question could not concern this abstract entity but only the true, real world; 3. this true, real world was indeed independent in its foreign reality that was refractory to the act of feeling, but nevertheless existed only in the felt and nowhere else, as content in container; and finally, 4. they did not see that only by means of this containership did we sensibly perceive the true, real world as something refractory and contrasting, and knew it in this way and not in any other way. This is the world, contained in the felt, about which I was speaking and not about another world; in fact I could not speak or pose a question about another world.

1453. Someone may perhaps object to the theory I have given about space, and say that if nature obliged the animator-principle to vest the foreign reality with space, the principle would never err in doing this, but it does err. For example, in dreams we vest our imaginings with space; in madness the most extraordinary [illusions] are entertained about dimensions, even about parts of the body, as in the case of the man who believed that his nose had grown enormously.<sup>176</sup> Also in

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Blondel, *De viribus imaginationis super foetibus* (1737), p. 47.

a wakened state there is a phenomenon that resembles that of amputees when they refer the pain to the limbs they no longer have.

Leaving aside any observation about the testimony of mentally ill people, whether they always speak the truth about what they feel, I say that in the cases mentioned, the error is not in vesting the felt entities with that particular extension but in the judgment made about their reality, as must also happen in the case of external touch, to which all judgments on the real existence of felt entities refer (*New Essay*). For the rest, the law followed by the animator-principle in vesting felt entities with space is always the same. It vests with space in its own feeling not only the reality but the feeling itself. Thus, the reality receives extension from the feeling in which it is present. Precisely for this reason we must note that the space with which the principle vests felt entities appears to be double. I have called it on the one hand internal and subjective (this concerns feelings), and on the other external and extrasubjective, which concerns reality considered *in se* and constitutes the external world. Moreover, this second space is always an extension of fixed measure or is measurable, whereas the first is *per se* not a fixed measure, and only receives measure from the connection of identity it has with the second. Note: from measure, space receives the exteriority to our body and the absolute mode in which it is considered. This in turn arises from the concept of reality considered precisely *in se*, as extraneous to the felt element. Hence we do not naturally have measured space but acquire the feeling and concept of it from sensible experience and from movement as I have explained in *New Essay*. Thus, when we vest an entity we have felt with measured, external space, 1. we use the natural instinct we have for vesting everything we feel with extension because the principle of space is our generic nature; 2. the space we use in this, in so far as it is exterior and measured, is acquired; 3. that which guides us in our application of this external measure of space to the felt entities is habit and therefore also similar cases, because we have learnt from experience that a particular measure of external space corresponds to a particular felt entity.

Granted this, it is no surprise that these norms drawn from experience and used by habit, sometimes deceive us because the

norms that similar cases can give are not absolute. Error therefore falls on the *external measure* of space and not on natural space as found in our fundamental feeling.

1454. Before taking up the discussion concerning mobilisation, we must firmly establish what distinguishes the principle of pure space from the animator-sensitive principles of bodies; the substantial difference between them can easily escape us. I said that the animator-principle of bodies is an act done by the principle of space when the monad is given it. We need to keep in mind what I have said so often, that a substantial subject is constituted by 'that which is one, first and container in a particular ens', even when this first element of the ens which unifies and contains all the rest is itself an act of another and prior principle. The sensitive act that feels and animates a body is that which is first in the total feeling which terminates in the felt body; it unifies and contains all the felt. It gives unity to this feeling so that nothing remains outside the feeling. Hence, the feeling is *in se* undivided, and divided from everything else. In fact, all the sensitive acts that terminate in other bodies and therefore constitute other entia are excluded from this feeling because every principle and term that stands on its own is an ens on its own. Hence the animator and sentient principle of a body is not confused with the other animator and sentient principles of other extended things that remain outside it like other entia. Not only does the animator and sentient principle of a body unite and contain in itself the felt, extended body, that is, it contains it as a quiescent term and purely possesses it, but also dominates the body, and by acting in it modifies it; in other words, it possesses the body actively. This is a new property that characterises the substantial subject. The substantial subject is always an active principle that has accomplished its act in its term and contains it in the measure that it exercises and posits its activity in it.

1455. Someone may perhaps object: 'The principle of space is included in the animator-sensitive principle of bodies. The sensitive principles of bodies are also acts of the principle of space. Therefore each sensitive principle of bodies would have to feel all the other principles with their terms.'

I reply: the principle of space is certainly contained in the sensitive principle of the body, but only in the sensitive

principle's first act which terminates in pure space and not in the second acts which the sensitive principles of bodies are.

Another objection could be: 'If every sensitive principle whose term is the corporeal extended is a subject on its own, that is, an ens different from all other entia, then the principle of space will all the more be a subject and an ens; it will contain in itself and feel all its second acts which the sensitive principles of bodies are. Such an ens would be a wonder, of which we have no experience! Moreover it would involve the absurdity that many subjects were in another subject, whereas a subject must essentially be one and first, divided from every other subject and containing all the rest of the ens.'

I will leave aside the wonder that the concept of such an ens would present to our ignorance, because wonder does not constitute a philosophical objection. The other difficulty is automatically solved by my teaching about relationships. We saw that there are relationships which, when they change, lose the identity of substance; there are also different substances and entia. Thus a subjective ens is such solely because it is not contained in another. But if it is considered contained with the relationship of content, it is no longer a subject or an ens on its own but is immediately an appurtenance and a term of another subject. Thus, animator-sensitive acts of bodies, as second acts of the principle of space and as such united individually to it, do not form subjects or entia different from it but are subjects and entia in so far as they have a mode of existing *in se*. Each does not feel that it is a second act of another principle, but feels only itself and its term and nothing else, and this is the mode of existence relative to itself. According to this mode, each is totally closed within itself, and precisely in so far as existing closed within itself, without anything else existing through it, it is a subject and an ens separate from all other entia. On the other hand, nothing prevents something else (the principle of space) from having it within itself, in which case it exists relative to space, and as such is neither ens nor subject. In this way, if entia and subjects are not closed within something else, they are called entia and subjects, but if closed within something else, they have the nature of matter, not of entia or subjects.



B

*Mobilisation*

1456. I now turn to the other mode of action of the feeling principle which makes our body and other bodies connected with it *mobile* within certain limits. But I must first explain the cause of movement generally, and then investigate the extent to which the animating, sentient principle of the body participates in motion as cause. To make this rather complicated theory more clear, I will present it through a series of theorems and problems. I have already touched upon the first theorem, but it will be helpful if I explain it more fully.

THEOREM 1

*An absolute quantity does not exist in corporeal extension*

1457. *Definition.* By 'absolute quantity' I mean the quantity known *per se* without any need to refer to another quantity, so that, when it is known, all others can be measured and known by being referred to this quantity. In other words, the *absolute quantity* is the measuring-unit of plurality, whereas plurality is always a *quantity relative* to the unit that measures it. Thus, if there is a *unit* that in a given order of things is known *per se*, there is an absolute quantity in that order. However, if there is not this measuring unit known *per se*, and it itself is measurable by other units, the absolute quantity does not exist in such an order; all that exists are relative quantities. For example, in the order of full essences, the unit is the full species known *per se*. It can be used to measure a complex of individuals and determine their number. In this order therefore there is absolute quantity. But in the order of extended, corporeal matter, I maintain that no absolute quantity exists, only mutually relative quantities. This is the theorem to be demonstrated.

*Demonstration.* There are only two units that can be used for measuring; the maximum and the minimum. The maximum unit is that which contains within itself the whole order of entities to be measured; the proportion that each is of the

whole or the share it forms of the whole, that is, of the maximum unit, can be ascertained. The minimum unit is that which cannot be made smaller than it is, not even by our mind, and hence cannot be divided; it is therefore essentially simple and one. This applies to the measurement of entities of a given order when it is possible to determine relative to each entity how many minimum units it contains or equals, or at least whether it contains more or less than each of the other entities. But in the case of the extension occupied by bodies neither a maximum nor a minimum absolute unit exists. A *maximum unit* does not exist because we can always think a body to be indefinitely extended; we will never arrive at a size beyond which we cannot think a greater size. A *minimum unit* does not exist because our mind can always make smaller the extension occupied and limited by a body, and we will never arrive at an extension so minute that we cannot divide it into two or more parts as we choose. Therefore no absolute quantity exists in the extension of bodies; only mutually relative quantities, which was to be demonstrated.

1458. *Objection 1.* The *relative* presupposes the *absolute*, because the two extremes of a relationship cannot be conceived unless one of them is founded on something that exists *in se*; no entity can have a relationship with another if it does not first (logically speaking) exist *in se*.

*Reply.* It is true that every relative presupposes an absolute. But the absolute presupposed by the relative does not have to be in the relative entity; it can be present in something else, and if it is, the relative exists to this other thing and not to itself. I have directly demonstrated that the extension shared in by matter has nothing absolute in it, and because this truth must be reconciled with the truth that the relative presupposes the absolute, the teaching I have given elsewhere about the extensive dimension of bodies is confirmed by a consequent corollary, namely, that dimension is not a perfect ens that has an existence *in se* but an imperfect ens that exists in another from which it receives existence. I am simply confirming what I proved in *Anthropology* [791–792], that the extended exists only in the simple, that is, in the feeling principle, as the term of the simple and not as an ens on its own.

1459. *Objection 2.* What you are saying seems to contradict

what you said in *A New Essay*, where you proved that the *tactile size* of bodies is the absolute size with which we measure the size we see and also the size given by the other sense-organs [NE, 2: 922–924].

*Reply.* We must distinguish between *what is absolute* and *what we assume to be absolute*, to which we refer and measure other relative things. In fact, even when the absolute is truly missing in an order of relatives, we can take one of the relatives and consider it dialectically as absolute. In doing this we can refer all the others to this one relative and thus give them a point of dialectical comparison and a measuring-unit. This is precisely what I did when I posited tactile size as the measure and norm to which the sizes given us by the other sense-organs can be referred.

In fact, tactile quantity is not a measuring-unit; it is only a *species* of the different sensible quantities present in the same body that is perceived by different sense-organs. And when we say that the sizes of the same body that are given by the other exterior sense-organs must be compared to the size given by tactile sensation (because *tactile* sensation indicates the limits of the fundamental feeling), we are simply saying that the quantity parts composing the sizes seen by the eyes or sensed by the other senses must be considered as equal to the same quantity parts composing the tactile size. But this does not give any measure, neither maximum nor minimum, of the tactile sizes; the quantity is still a relative quantity without anything absolute.

Tactile size therefore is a relative size, which we took to be absolute in order to have something firm to which we could reduce the variety of other sizes relative to other sense-organs.

Even the nature itself of *tactile size* demonstrates its relativity. When we say ‘tactile’, we are speaking about a size referred to the sense of touch. It is not therefore the supposed size of a body *in se* but of a body as sensed by touch. Hence, because it is a size relative to the feeling principle that feels it in the organ of touch, we cannot speak about an absolute size of a body *in se*, an abstraction made by the principle that feels the size. Even when it seems, through abstraction, that we are speaking about an absolute size, we delude ourselves, because we have extracted it through abstraction from the size we have *felt*, which we attribute to bodies *in se*.

An example will demonstrate the truth of this. Let us take two animals, and say that all the bodies felt by one animal are a hundred times smaller than those felt by the other animal. If all the proportions are equal, and even granted that both animals had reason and could talk, they could never believe, no matter how long they talked, that the bodies which each saw, appeared to them to have different sizes. Consequently the hypothesis would be absurd in regard to the fundamental feeling and touch, although not to the other sense-organs. These sense the bodies not directly but by means that proffer some signs of them, and these signs could be tactile sensations of varying size. Thus, the lens of an animal's eyes could give it visual images twice as large as those given by the lens of another animal's eyes; the images are *signs of bodies*. If these signs are then considered as tactile sensations (because every sense is touch), they can be larger or smaller. However a body directly felt by touch would give the same size, and the differently sized signs would therefore indicate a body of the same tactile size.

Hence, the sizes given by the other sense-organs are referred to the size given by touch as a sense-organ which feels the bodies directly and which reduces to the fundamental feeling, because the sizes given by the other sense-organs are not the sizes of the bodies but the sizes of signs from which the direct sizes of the bodies are induced. Nevertheless, neither touch nor the fundamental feeling ever give an absolute quantity; they give a quantity relative to the nature of the feeling principle which vests corporeal reality with extension.

#### THEOREM 2

*An absolute location does not exist in space*

1460. *Definition.* By absolute location I mean the position of a point in pure space, whose relationship with space differs from any other point.

*Demonstration.* Granted a point in pure space, it would have no distance to the extremity of space, whatever direction was taken in a straight line, because pure space has no limits of any kind. If another point were posited at any distance

whatsoever from the first point, its relationship with space would be no different from that of the first point, for what I said about the first would apply to this second point. Therefore, because the position of these points has a perfectly identical relationship, not a different relationship, they cannot have an *absolute location*, according to the definition, which was to be demonstrated.

1461. *Corollary 1.* *Location* is indifferent relative to pure space. Hence the position of the corporeal Universe in space is indifferent and is only *relative* to the different points assigned to it in space. These points can be assigned only through the corporeal feeling (to which the imagination also pertains) and through abstraction carried out on the corporeal felt.

*Coroll. 2.* The space occupied by a body is not called *location*, whose concept involves a relationship with something else. The space is an appurtenance of the body, and therefore the body's extension is part of its definition (*New Essay* [2: 820]).

*Coroll. 3.* However, although the extension of a body is an appurtenance of the body in such a way that the appurtenance contributes to the constitution of the essence expressed in the definition, the extension itself remains unoccupied by the body. Hence the corollary that two elements of a body pre-exist: 1. the foreign nature, and 2. the extension, and that the body is formed when the sensitive principle gives extension to the foreign nature.

*Coroll. 4.* But because every part without exception of pure extension is uniform and equal, and does not vary in absolute location in space, a body suffers no change in nature when vested with one part of extension rather than with another. Therefore, it remains identical even when changing the space it occupies.

1462. *Objection.* Mathematicians determine the location of any point in space by three lines passing through the point.

*Reply.* This confirms the thesis. All straight lines are determined by two points through which they each pass. Consequently the location of the mathematicians' point is not determined by its relationship with pure space (which would constitute an absolute location) but by the relationship between diverse points placed in space, which is the location I call relative.

## PROBLEM 1

*To determine why a body has in space the relative location it has rather than another location*

1463. *Introductory notions.* It is not contradictory that only one principle of space first exists and that later a corporeal term is given to it, so that different animal subjects originate within it, according to the multiplicity of the terms. And it is indifferent for the present question to define whether the addition of these terms is posterior in time to the principle of space or simply posterior in the logical order. The problem we have proposed simply requires us to determine why an animate entity appears in one relative location rather than in another, when its principle, which is its subject and is totally simple and unextended, has no relationship at all with locations relative to bodies in space.

We must also note that placing a foreign nature in space is simply to give it as term to the principle of space, that is, to place it in space, which is its term, as in its container.

1464. *Solution* To solve the problem we have set, let us suppose that there is a cause capable of placing a foreign nature in space, which is term of the principle of space. This principle, through its essentially sentient and feelable entic force, will impart feeling to this new term and vest it first of all with extension, in which alone it feels. Thus an animate subject will immediately exist, composed of soul and body, of principle and corporeal term. In such a case the principle, through the individual union to its term, is said to exist in the term. But in addition to vesting the foreign nature with extension, does the principle need to assign to the resulting body a determined location in space; in other words, before vesting the body with space, is it obliged to choose in which part of space it will place the body? Not at all; it needs do nothing more than vest the foreign nature with an appropriate extension, and once this is done, the body exists and exists as animate. The relationship between the existing body and pure space follows. And it is certainly not a relationship of location, because an absolute location does not exist (*Theorem 2*), that is, relative to the whole of space. Hence, only when the foreign nature is vested with its

appropriate space, is there a body surrounded by an empty space which is infinitely diffused in all directions.

But the Cause now wishes to give existence to another animate body. The principle of space will also vest with extension this second foreign nature given to it. But in carrying out this new act, which is first relative to the new term and therefore the principle of the new animate entity, it will not vest this second nature with the extension with which it vested the first nature and which has become an appurtenance of the body resulting from the vesting. It will vest it with a pure extension, which thus becomes an appurtenance of the new body. The principle of space therefore cannot give existence to a second animate body except on two conditions: 1. the second body must exist outside the extension of the first body, and 2. the distance of the second body from the first must be a determined distance.

1465. I say the principle has to make the second body exist outside the extension of the first body because the extension appropriate to the first has become one ens with it; it is no longer a pure separable extension. Hence, if the principle made the second exist in the same place as the first, it would be the same body. I need to explain this because it contains the reason for the *impenetrability* of bodies, which is the principal property of the corporeal nature given us by feeling.

The extension of the foreign nature (also called corporeal) is, it must be noted, the first effect of sentimentation. If therefore the extension of the body is a product of the principle to which the foreign nature is added as term, and if this extension is determined by the quantity of foreign nature, then the very same extension cannot be given to two quantities of this nature. Also, a quantity added to the first nature must be vested by a different extension and therefore occupy another place in space. This is the ontological explanation of the *impenetrability of bodies*. Granted also that the foreign nature, as final activity of its own principle, is simple, it must nevertheless be multiple in that it is given in separate portions to the principle of space. Hence each individual part of it draws from the principle of space to which it is added its own extension distinct from the extension of another portion. If the individual parts of final activity are in themselves simple entities, they are individually separate from each other. Thus, that which in the final activity is distinction

and separation of simple entities, is, in the sense-stimulating feeling phenomenon of the extension they receive (which gives them the name 'bodies')<sup>177</sup> distinction and separation of limited extension. As a result of this there are many bodies each of which cannot confuse its extension with that of another and hence they necessarily become impenetrable. In fact, just as the two portions of foreign nature cannot be confused with each other, so the two acts of sentimentation cannot be confused; these acts, posited by the entic force of the principle of space, constitute two animal principles. Nor can there be any confusion between the two extensions with which these two acts of sentimentation vest the two individual portions of foreign nature.

1466. But the second condition, which is necessary for the solution of the problem, is more difficult to explain. How can the distance between a first animate body and a second animate body be determined? We can easily understand how the principle of space, to which two individual portions of foreign nature have been given, vests them with distinct extensions. But will it vest them with distinct extensions in such a way that the resulting two animate bodies exist at a precise distance from each other? This cannot depend on the principle but on the Cause, which presents the two portions of foreign natures to the principle.

I always suppose that these portions of foreign natures are simple, unextended entities before they are vested with extension through sentimentation. Two unextended entities do not have distance between them, only separation of nature. How then, when vested with extension, do they become bodies

<sup>177</sup> *Extension* must therefore be part of the definition of bodies because the word was applied to the foreign reality already felt (*New Essay* 2: 752–753, 871). We also see here the origin of Descartes' and Leibniz' mistaken definitions of bodies. The former limited his thought to extension (*New Essay* 2: 750). Leibniz, placing its essence in the *monads*, glimpsed that prior to extension there could be a *simple nature*. But he neglected the characteristic of extension and could not explain it. For him, extension resulted from simple points. He was troubled by a false concept that body had to be an absolute substance standing on its own. But this would have needed some *first* thing on which the many and the extended could be founded (*New Essay* 1: 283 fn, 206, 287, 751, 869 and fn.).



distant from each other in a straight line of a determined length? We can conceive this fact in the following way.

Pure, infinite space is the term of one principle. All this space is unextended in that principle. Hence, the activity of the principle extends and finishes in the whole of space, so that not even the tiniest bit of space can be assigned in it where the quiescent activity of the principle is not present. Granted this therefore, and because there is no difference between allowing the principle of space to have a foreign nature and putting this nature in communication and continuation with the activity of the principle, clearly the foreign nature can be added by the Cause to the activity of the principle of space, in any part whatsoever of space. Hence, if an animate body already exists, another animate body can be made to exist by the Cause at any determined distance, provided that the Cause adds the foreign nature to the final activity of the principle of space, in that part of space which has the desired distance from the first body. Here alone therefore the principle of space will carry out the sentimentation and vest with space the foreign nature it has been given.

The problem is now resolved. The Cause has the power to add the foreign reality to the activity of the principle of space anywhere where the activity terminates and a new action begins which vests the reality with extension and animates it.

1467. *Corollary 1.* We see therefore that it pertains to the sensitive principle of space to vest every reality given it with a different extension and thus constitute the body. But it pertains to the corporeal principle and not to the principle of space to determine the distance between two bodies and thus assign them a mutually relative location. The corporeal principle gives the sensitive principle of space the terminative reality by joining the reality to the principle's activity present in the whole of space. It does this in that part of the principle's activity that corresponds to a point in space whose distance from pre-existent bodies is determined by the corporeal principle itself.

*Corollary 2.* We also find another corollary. We know that the corporeal principle joins the foreign reality as term to the sensitive principle of space and adds the term in that part of the this principle's activity that pleases it and corresponds to a part of space. This give us the reason why the sensitive principle

of space can vest the foreign reality with an extension of any size. I did not define this reason earlier but it is simply the following. The corporeal principle joins the foreign reality to the activity present in the whole of space. In doing so, it joins this reality to a larger or smaller part of the activity. This larger or smaller part corresponds to a larger or smaller part of space, with which the sensitive principle simultaneously vests the reality.

### THEOREM 3

*The cause of the motion of simple transference must be attributed to the activity proper to the corporeal principle*

1468. *Definitions* 1. By 'motion of simple transference' I mean the motion of a body which totally and simultaneously changes its place without having any point of support on which it can centre its forces in order to transpose itself. Consequently its parts would move successively and by diverse impulses.

2. By 'cause of the motion of simple transference' I do not mean the impulse that a body, already in motion, gives to another body, because in this case the motion is communicated, not begun. I mean the cause which originates the motion of simple transference that previously did not exist.

*Demonstration.* The demonstration of this theorem is a consequence of two propositions established above. The first proposition is: the determination of the distance between one body and another in space, that is, the relative location, pertains to the activity of the corporeal principle (*Prob.* 1). The second: an appropriate extension is certainly essential to a body, but its essence is indifferent to whether the extension given to it corresponds more to one part of space than to another. Therefore a body undergoes no change at all but preserves its perfect identity whatever its relative location (*PSY*, 2: 1221–1222). The reason is that extension is given to the body by sentimentation, and is not proper to the foreign nature which is vested with extension as by something not belonging to it but made to belong through its union with the principle of space.

In fact, granted the truth of these two propositions, it is clear

that the corporeal principle, which determines the relative location of bodies, can continuously change this location and thus make them appear in different places by a succession of minimum intervals. This is precisely the motion of simple transference, whose continuity can be only phenomenal (*PSY*, 2: 1209–1221). Therefore the corporeal principle is a cause which can explain the motion of simple transference, which was to be demonstrated.

1469. *Objection.* This theory of the cause of motion of simple transference seems to contradict the other principle that ‘relative location does not constitute the essence of a body’. If relative location constitutes nothing pertaining to the essence and identity of a body, the body’s motion will not be made through any *passivity* it experiences. But you suppose that a body is moved by a foreign principle. You therefore suppose that this principle acts on it, and if it acts on it, the body will be passive and thus receive a modification and a change in itself.

*Reply.* On the contrary, the theory gives rise precisely to the opposite. It alone explains why a body can move without having to experience something or be modified. This does not seem possible in the other theories, and is therefore fresh proof of the truth of my theory. In fact *experience* and *modification* can be undergone or received only by an already existing and fully constituted subject. But the cause I assign to the motion of a body, and the action of the cause, precede the constitution of the body because it is precisely the cause that constitutes the body. To move a body is, according to me, to constitute it in successive, proximate and different parts of space. Hence it is not to make the body experience something or to modify it. On the contrary, it is to make it be what it is. The fact that it is in diverse parts does not pertain to its being, and is therefore indifferent to it.

From this we draw the following most important teaching: an entity can be a term of an agent in two modes: either 1. as what is constituted by the agent — this happens first of all in creation, and pertains to *receiving*, not to experiencing; or 2. as that, which already fully constituted in its subjective existence, is *modified* by the agent. Only this pertains to the concept of *experiencing*.

## THEOREM 4

*The inertia attributed to bodies is by itself insufficient to explain why a body moving in a straight line continues uniformly in its movement until a cause either stops or slows or diverts it*

1470. *Explanation of the Theorem.* With this theorem I wish to demonstrate that if a body is to continue in its motion of simple transference, it must be moved by a continuously operating force. It is not enough to suppose that the force acted on it at the first moment when the body was made to pass from rest to motion; the force's action must accompany it and carry it throughout the whole of its journey.

*Demonstration.* Given that a body which moves uniformly in a straight line meets another at rest and continues on perfectly in the same straight line, and that no other forces are involved whether gravity or any other, the resulting phenomenon is the following: the struck body is moved in the same direction and the two bodies will continue forward in contact with each other as if they were one body but with a movement slower than that of the first body. And the greater the mass of the two united bodies compared to the mass of the first body, the slower the movement will be. This fact demonstrates that the cause of the first body's movement is distributed uniformly in the total mass of the two bodies, whereas the cause had first been distributed solely in the mass of the first body. This fact results in the following induction. If the body that's in movement were kept in motion solely by its inertia, without the continuous action and presence of the moving force which is the cause of the motion, we could not explain how the motion residing in the inertia was communicated to another body, because inertia is not communicated, nor could we explain how there was an exact distribution of movement throughout all parts of the two bodies, because the second body, in a state of rest, cannot pass into motion unless a moving force is communicated to it. If therefore this force is not in the first body, where there is only a motion that is inertia and not the claimed force, the second body would never move. Nor can we say that the force moving the second body comes from elsewhere and is not

communicated by the first body. In fact the opposite is shown by the reduction of speed seen in the first body, a reduction which is proportionate to the mass of the second body. We cannot doubt that a part of the force which invested the first body passes over into the second and as a result the motion continued on in the first through the uninterrupted action of the force. And when a part of this force has passed into the second body, the motion itself of the first diminishes, with no opposition from the inertia; indeed, the very inertia of the first makes this possible precisely by not opposing an obstacle.

Inertia is therefore not the cause but a condition of the (phenomenal) continuity of motion. The cause is the continuous action in the body of the motion's cause, which I have posited in the corporeal principle (*Theor.* 3). This is what was to be demonstrated.

## PROBLEM 2

*How does a body communicate movement to another by impulse, that is, how do we explain the phenomena presented by the clash of two solid bodies,<sup>178</sup> relative to the communication of motion?*

1471. The theories already discussed supply the solution to this problem.

We have seen the following five kinds of cause:

1. The cause which vests the foreign reality with an extension of determined size. This cause is in the activity of the *principle of space*, which is the antecedent of the *sensitive principle* (*Prob.* 1, coroll. 2).

2. The cause of the impenetrability of bodies, that is, of that property by which two or more bodies cannot have the same extension. This cause is also the law according to which the principle of space, terminating with its action in foreign reality, must vest this reality with an extension proper to the

<sup>178</sup> I am not talking about bodies of an elastic nature because in my opinion *elasticity* is not an original quality of a body, that is, a quality of elementary bodies. It is a result of the composition of elementary particles and molecules, as I will explain elsewhere.

reality, and this extension becomes a part of the reality's essence and is therefore incommunicable (*Prob.* 1).

3. The cause by which each body has one relative location rather than another. This cause is the *corporeal principle*, which gives to the *principle of space* the foreign reality in one part of space rather than in another, in every part of which the activity of this principle is present (*ibid.*).

4. The cause of the movement of simple transference. This is the cause of the relative location of bodies (*Theor.* 3).

5. The cause of the continuity of movement in a body posited in motion. This cause is still the permanent activity of the corporeal principle, not the inertia alone of the body. Inertia is the cause of rest, not of motion nor of the continuation of motion (*Theor.* 4).

1472. From the second of these propositions (the cause of impenetrability) we have logically the following corollary: 'If the corporeal principle which presents diverse portions of terminative reality to the principle of space, joined two of these portions of reality to the activity of the principle, so that the activity of the principle, in response to certain parts of space, was obliged to vest the two realities totally or partly with the same extension, then in the very act in which the two bodies appeared existing, they would clash with each other and withdraw in another direction.'

But because elementary bodies have been formed from the very beginning of creation, we cannot be witnesses to the phenomenon that we conceive possible, of a clash between two bodies in the very act by which they come into existence as bodies. Yet something similar happens in the clash of bodies which move towards each other, or one towards another at rest. If we suppose that motion is intermittent, as I have defended, the clash is simply the attempt by the principle of space to vest with an identical portion of space the two terminative realities given it. But because this cannot happen, the bodies violently separate. The principle of space, now forced to withdraw its attempt, and acting contrary to direct instinct, allows the two terminative realities to be sufficiently separated from each other that each retains its appropriate extension. They change position without detaching themselves from the activity of the principle of space, which thus suffers an *experience*.

But how does this harmonise with the teachings I have given above, where I argued as follows:

1. The corporeal principle joins the terminative reality (which is its proper activity) to the activity of the principle of space.

2. This activity (of the principle of space) extends to the whole of space and because equally present to everything, has an ability that can be considered in as many respects as there are assignable parts in space. Therefore equivalent virtual parts can be conceived in it.

3. The corporeal principle is responsible for joining the terminative reality, which is also simple, to one of these parts rather than another.

Consequently, if we suppose that the principle of space, when vesting two realities with extension and constituting them two bodies, is the cause of their clash in the first moment of their existence and of their mutual withdrawal from each other, then the cause of the phenomenon of the bodies' clash is evidently to be attributed to the principle of space and not to the corporeal principle.

But this is not the case, because if it were, the principle of space would be, as I said, passive and suffer violence. And this is what I must explain.

We must bear in mind therefore that the terminative reality, as the extreme part of the activity of its own principle, preserves some activity of this principle. When this activity is vested with extension, and thus becomes a body, we find the activity in the whole of that extension, and whenever two portions of the activity or reality are joined, they operate as if they were one sole reality. The force itself that moves a body is an effort to make the body leave its relative location and take up another in a uniformly ordered succession, but always retaining its extension. Keeping these notions in mind, let us consider a perfectly solid sphere moving in a perfectly straight line towards another sphere at rest and crashing into it. What happens? I find the following analysis a sufficient explanation.

1473. 1. First, the sphere in motion, colliding with the sphere at rest, encounters an obstacle. Its effort to take up the successive location is now prevented from directly obtaining its effect. The obstacle arises from the fact that each body retains its

extension in virtue of the continuous action of the principle of space, which gives each its extension. The clash therefore arises from the activity that has in itself the *terminative reality* and pertains to the corporeal principle. But this clash could not happen if the terminative reality were not vested with extension and did not retain this extension as something proper to it and if it were not active in the whole of the extension. Thus, there are two co-causes of the clash, and one alone would not be sufficient to explain it, because

1. an activity pertaining to the *corporeal principle* has to be present in the reality, and this activity is strictly speaking the active, battling cause;

2. to this active reality an *extension* must be attributed which is continuously given it by the *principle of space*. This extension is not the active, battling cause but the occasional, *inert cause*; it is the extension that the reality and activity strives to retain by battling against the other reality and activity, which itself is vested with its own extension that is continuously given it by the principle of space.

But when I say that the *reality* battles to retain its own extension, I do not mean that it is using its instinct and own force in its attempt to retain its extension. On the contrary, the extension is imposed on it by the *principle of space*, and the instinctive force which preserves the extension for it is therefore to be attributed totally to the instinctive activity of this principle. But because the instinctive force and activity keep the reality covered, as it were, with the extension, the reality vested in this way battles against the extension, and does so therefore according to the laws the extension imposes on it. Thus, a warrior covered totally with armour does not instinctively keep the breastplate, helmet and other parts of his armour in coherence with himself, but granted that he is vested with them, he battles according to the laws, management and art that that kind of military armament necessarily determine for him. We must say therefore that the active causes battling each other in the clash of the two bodies are strictly speaking the following two:

1. The *corporeal principle*. This determines the relative location of the two bodies and moves one against the other at rest. Its activity is manifested and resides in the *terminative reality* of the body.



2. The *principle of space*. Because this principle must by its own instinct give an extension to the *terminative reality*, it cannot give it when the extension is confused with that of another *terminative reality*. Hence this instinctive operation is impeded and opposed, and this opposition and impediment is manifested and resides in the *extension* of the body. In this conflict between the two principles, the principle that gives way is the *corporeal principle* as the motor activity, not the principle of space that gives the extension, which remains intact in solid bodies. For an instant the corporeal principle suspends the effect of motion and distributes the motor force in the two bodies so that the principle of space is able to maintain them vested with the appropriate extension.

In this conflict therefore, the *principle of space* suffers a *passivity* from the corporeal activity and strictly speaking from the corporeal principle. Through this passivity the act with which it vests the two realities with appropriate extension preserves for a few instants their extension at the same place of contact, while the corporeal principle attempts something impossible: as the principle of the motion of transference it tries to join the two realities to virtual parts of its activity from which an extension in the same location would come to the realities. But in the last analysis, it is the corporeal principle that gives that in, and the principle of space triumphs.

Consequently, the *corporeal principle*, in its turn, in so far as it manifests itself in the terminative reality, also suffers a passivity from the principle of space, and to a greater degree. Hence the activity and passivity is reciprocal. However, while the principle of space suffers a passivity consisting in a *struggle* that does not *modify* the effect of its action, the corporeal principle suffers both an *experience* and a *modification*.

1474. At this point, before continuing, I will list some consequences concerning the nature of the activity and passivity of entia-principles. They are, I think, very important for determining the nature of action and passive experience.

Using the analysis I have carried out and similar cases, and because I cannot find in nature any contrary case, I can present the following teaching about the action and experience of entia-principles, a teaching confirmed also by reasoning:

- a) Principles can never clash with each other or *directly*

struggle against each other. They can only unite, and in various ways join together or separate, as I said in *Psychology* concerning sensitive principles and intellective principles.

b) *Action* and *passive experience* takes place among entia-principles solely because of some *terminative nature*, which becomes the term of two or more of them, that is, becomes, as it were, the field of battle of their struggle. — This happens because each principle has the same nature for its term in another mode, in accord with its particular characteristics, and exercises an action in this nature in conformity with its own natural instincts, with the result that the different effects can obstruct and collide with each other. Thus the principles are, by rebound, forced to modify their action, exercising it with greater effort and difficulty in order to overcome the obstacle.

c) The experience which in this mode the diverse principles occasionally and indirectly undergo from each other is of two kinds. The first consists simply in a *struggle*, that is, in a stimulus which stimulates the instinct of the ens-principle to seek outside itself a higher level of activity and force (this happens when it can totally overcome the obstacle). The second kind consists in a *struggle* and a *modification* of its activity. This happens when the ens-principle is obliged by the obstacle not only to unleash a greater activity but to give in partly and modify this activity, simply because, unable to dominate the obstacle totally, it is the loser either totally or partly.

d) Strictly speaking, passivity without activity resides in the *terminative reality* in so far as this is inert, that is, is in the power of the principles that fight over its control.

1475. 2. Returning now to my analysis of the phenomena that arise in the collision of two solid spheres of equal mass, we supposed that one in motion meets the other at rest and in such a way that their centres of gravity lie in the line of direction of the motion. We must now look at the other phenomenon where the sphere in motion, upon touching the other, stops for an instant, puts pressure on the second and through this pressure communicates to it a part of its motor force. It loses this part for as long as the motor force is uniformly diffused throughout both spheres, as if they were only one body. The two spheres

now begin to move together with a speed lower than that of the first sphere, and this speed depends on how much the two masses added together overcome the mass of the first. We can sum this up in a formula. If  $M$  and  $M'$  are the masses of the two spheres, and  $V$  and  $V'$ , the speeds prior to and posterior to the collision, the speed of the two bodies after the collision can be expressed by the following formula:

$$V' = \frac{MV}{M + M'}$$

This fact allows me to make the following inductions:

1476. a) The corporeal principle acts with three acts distinct in their effect:

1. With one act it provides the terminative reality which, however large or small, is always simple, and varying only in intensive quantity. Consequently we can call this reality, with some propriety, a *monad* and thus give an interpretation to Leibniz's thought, which he himself did not give but nevertheless can be found in the depth of his thought. This monad is the individual portion of corporeal reality prior to the portion being vested with extension.

2. With another contemporary act it assigns a relative location to the reality, joining this location as term to the virtual point of activity of the principle of space. This point corresponds with the location and, as simple, receives as its term the monad, which is also simple.

3. With the third act it successively and uniformly changes this location. This is the motor act, the motor force.

These three acts must be seen as distinct because the movement of the bodies supposes the first permanent act, that is, the bestowal of the terminative reality and supposes that the second act has preceded because at the beginning of the movement the body must have had its relative location. In addition, the motor force which vests the body migrates partly into the body with which it collides, while the other two acts do not migrate from the body: the first remains, the second ceases, substituting what it is, by a ceaseless, ordered cessation and reproduction of itself.

1477. b) Because the force which invests and moves a body migrates from one body to the other, it is something that does not pertain to the inert mass of the body, which, whether

invested by the force or not, remains identical. The force comes therefore from another incorporeal ens which is precisely what I call corporeal principle.

1478. c) The motor force differs not only from the corporeal mass which undergoes the motion, but from the motion itself that is its effect. We see this in the very *moment* when the two bodies, upon colliding, remain motionless until the force has completed diffusing itself uniformly in both masses. Only then does the effect of the motion begin.

Note: in saying ‘the very *moment* when the two bodies, upon colliding, remain motionless’, I mean neither an instant nor a very short time. Our general experience may tell us that we are dealing with a minute portion of time, practically incalculable, but this is due to the smallness of the bodies we observe, not because the thing must always be so. Indeed, we can in general establish the principle that ‘the time necessary for a body in motion to communicate movement to another at rest into which it crashes’ is (granted a spherical form in the two solid bodies) in inverse proportion to the speed multiplied by the mass of the first, and in direct proportion to the mass of the second. If the mass of the body at rest is expressed by  $M'$ , the moving body by  $M$  and its speed by  $V$ , then the time ( $Q$ ) that they are both stopped and at rest, which is necessary for the motor force to distribute itself uniformly in the system of the two bodies, can be expressed by:

$$Q = \frac{M'}{MV}$$

Clearly, the time of rest can increase to many hours, and days and even centuries, because the value of  $M'$ , the mass of the body that is struck, can be indefinitely increased, leaving aside the possibility of  $MV$  decreasing, that is, the mass and speed of the striking body.

And from this we have the following corollary:

‘Not only is the movement of a body constantly maintained until it encounters an obstacle, but the migration of the force of one body into another is also maintained for as long as the force can migrate. The force is extinguished only when the migration is reciprocal, in the contrary direction, as happens when two moving spheres of equal mass and speed clash in the direction of

the centres of the forces. Therefore the cause of the continuation of the motion resides in the continuation of the motor force in act, not in the inertia of the corporeal mass, as I have said'.

1479. d) The pressure of one body on another, evident in the clash, is due to the impediment that the motor force encounters in producing its effect of motion. The impediment compels the force to modify itself, to partly migrate, that is, to divide and invest the body at rest, distributing itself uniformly between the two bodies. The *impediment* to the motion encountered by the motor force on crashing into the body at rest is not a positive impediment posited by the body at rest; it is simply the law that 'the motor force must first invest, that is, affect the whole body so that motion results. To achieve this, the force uses time during which there is no motion. The effort to produce motion without motion is the *motor force in act* without its effect but preparing to produce motion. This act with which the motor force prepares to produce motion when investing the body at rest takes the form of *pressure* during the time there is no motion'. Thus the mechanical transmission of the motion of one body to another is carried out by means of the phenomenon of pressure. If we suppose both bodies perfectly solid, the action of one consists solely in communicating part of the motor force, while the experience of the other consists in receiving this force — there is no other modification or action. The midway point between this action and experience is where a portion of the motor force detaches itself from the first body and from the remaining portion of motor force, and invades the other body. This is the point where the phenomenon of the *pressure* is manifested, and the pressure, which ceases as soon as the force is fully distributed, indicates a bond and continuity of force between the two bodies.

1480. e) We have seen that a real activity exists as substratum in the corporeal mass and I have called it the *final activity of the (corporeal) principle*. Two things must be borne in mind: 1. Every activity pertains to what has the nature of principle and therefore the principle is present also in the final activity *in so far as* the principle is that activity; and 2. the only direct conflict possible between principles is the conflict I have described, the conflict in a *term* in which two separate principles carry out their diverse activities. However, principles and their activities

are capable of unifying and joining together. Granted this therefore, we see how the activities in two bodies, one of which is in motion, the other at rest, and the former is attempting to take the location of the latter, must unite and become one activity. The two principles in this case unite but only as present in these final activities, not otherwise. Hence the pressure exercised by one body on the other in the clash is the operation that unites and continues the two realities or final activities. Therefore, because they now become one single continued reality, the motor force must divide itself uniformly in this reality: it reduces itself in the reality of the first body to communicate itself to the reality of the second. Hence we must in this case distinguish:

1. the *time* needed by the motor force to distribute itself equally throughout the whole reality of the two bodies, which has become one, so that the force can move them as one body — during this time all motion is suspended;

2. the *effort* made by the motor force accumulated in the first body to migrate partly into the second body at rest — the pressure lies in this effort;

3. the *motion* which is then taken up not only in the first body but in both as in one body, and the *quantity* of this motion equals the previous quantity.

The explanation of the theory of the *composition of motion*, on which the laws of mechanics are founded, is found in this unification of the final activities in the two bodies and in the communication given to this *reality* (now become one) of the motor force. I say the composition of the forces of every species, not only of many forces impelling in various directions but of attracting forces, whose origin is in the *animating principle* and depend only remotely on the principle of space, within which the animating principles of bodies come to be.

1481. f) Hence, the composition of the *motor forces* of any kind whatsoever which affect the same body is an effect and also another proof that all principles and their activities, that are the cradles of the principles, have the property of being able to *unite* and unify, whereas the terminative nature has the property of *dividing* and effecting the plurality and multiplication of principles. But when the terminative realities unite and continue on, then the activities together with the acts that present the

activities to the principle of space, also unite and become one sole act that embraces the terminative nature as one totally united thing. Consequently, when a body crashes into another, the motor force which was previously present only in the first body, invades the second and spreads throughout it.

1482. But we must examine the nature of this force. It is a simple activity, just as every principle is simple. Its *quantity* therefore can be only *intensive*. The measure of the *intensive quantity* of the motor force is taken from its effect and is simply the *velocity* of the motion, which equals the space covered and

the time taken:  $V = \frac{S}{T}$ . We can understand that this is the case

not by considering bodies affected by terrestrial gravitation, like those about which we make our observations, but by thinking about bodies free of all gravitation, affected solely by mechanical impulses. I have so far considered them in this way and particularly when I said that ‘only the action of the impelling body communicates motion’ — I totally abstracted from the difficulty of moving a body caused by its weight, that is, its gravitation. If we consider therefore that *speed* alone is the measure of the intensity of the motor force, we see that the *simple, unextended cause*, that is, the motor force, produces an *extended* phenomenon which is the space travelled by the body in a given time. But in what way can an active cause, lacking all extension, produce an extended effect? This cannot be explained, indeed it is impossible, because the effect would have positive properties that are not only different but contrary to the positive properties of the cause. This confirms my theory that extension does not come to a body from the corporeal principle but is added by the other cause that receives the terminative reality, that is, from the principle of space. And because extension does not come from the corporeal principle, nor does the relative *location* or the *space* travelled by the motion come from it. But just as the principle of space vests with space the reality that it receives from the corporeal principle, so it gives the reality the location which corresponds to the virtual, simple point of its own activity, at which point the reality is given it by the corporeal principle. Thus it also gives the space travelled by the moved body when the corporeal

principle successively and in an ordered way changes the virtual points of its activity to which it attaches the terminative reality. Thus, the speed, that is, the space travelled by the body and the time taken, becomes the measure of the motor force. Also, the *intensive quantity* of the force has a perfect correspondence and proportion with the *extensive quantity* of the space travelled. This is the ontological principle of the application of algebra to geometry, of numbers or of discrete quantity to the continuous quantity of spaces.

In all this we find the theory of *intensive quantity* in so far as corresponding to *extensive quantity*, which I sum up as follows.

*Intensive quantity* pertains to the ens-principle; *extensive quantity* solely to the ens-term.

*Intensive quantity* is purely a given quantity of action considered in the *principle*, which is simple; hence, the quantity of action considered in it is itself also simple. But when this simple *quantity of action* pertains to a principle that has an *extended term*, the action of the principle must terminate in the extension. Therefore the *quantity of that quantity* which, as simple, is called intensive, dissolves into a terminative quantity that presents extension and is called *extensive quantity* corresponding to the *intensive quantity* of the principle's action.

Hence, when I said that the corporeal principle adds its final activity to the action of the principle of space by attaching it to different *virtual points* of the latter, these virtual points must be understood as the active energy of the principle of space. This principle, because simple, also has an *intensive quantity* which in its term dissolves into infinite space. We can therefore distinguish in *intensive quantity* as many parts as there are extended points assignable in space. And the greater the number of extended points in the space term (*extensive quantity*), the greater the corresponding *intensive quantity* in the principle of space.

1483. g) However, we must consider more thoroughly the proposition that 'the motor force is simple, and its only measure is the velocity of the free body it moves'. First of all, we must remember that as an activity the motor force has the nature of principle in so far as a principle is in each of its activities, in the way that each activity can contain a principle. But I said that the property of principles is union and unification,



whereas the property of terms is divisibility and separability, and the *multiplication* of principles, as I said, originates from the property of the terms, not from the nature of the principles. Granted this, there is consequently a motor force of a particular *intensive quantity*, and as long as this quantity is not multiplied (as it would be if it were able to have a simple term), a mathematical point to which this force were applied would be moved by the force with a *speed* in total correspondence to the total intensive quantity the force possessed. But if the movable term multiplies, then, according to the principles laid down, the force itself must also multiply, as much as the terms multiply. Thus, the intensive quantity of the force that we have supposed to be determined and is now divided and multiplied into many terms, must, relative to each term, decrease in proportion to the number of these terms, which are its movable elements. Hence, the *speed* of the movement imparted to each movable body will decrease in proportion to the increase in number of movable bodies which the force must simultaneously move; this is precisely what happens in the communication of motion through impulse. We also see that it is the case in astronomical attraction. If we suppose that the attracting body emits a determined quantity of attractive force, this force decreases in proportion to the increase of the points on which it exercises attraction. If the attraction expands in a sphere, and if the extreme points of diverse concentric spheres are proportionate to the increase of the square of the radius of the spheres, the attraction must manifest itself in indirect proportion to the square of the distances.

The *intensity*, therefore, of the motor force not only dissolves into the *extension* but also *multiplies*, dissolves into a *multiplicity*, that manifests the intensity. Thus, *number* becomes capable of manifesting *intensive unity*, because the latter, multiplying as the term multiplies, divides into *levels* that can be *unified* according to the condition of the principles, or *divide* and multiply according to the condition of the terms to which they have an active relationship. The levels of activity are made present in these terms and receive from them this manner of limitation.

Scientists, in order to obtain an expression of the quantity of motion, usually multiply the mass of the moving body by

the velocity, giving the formula  $F = MV$ . In this expression,  $MV$  expresses all the force such that, if the same quantity of force were applied to a body of another mass,  $M'$ , the velocity of this,  $V'$ , would be  $V' = \frac{MV}{M'}$ .

If therefore in the expression  $MV$  the mass were reduced to an absolute unity, we would have, as I said, the intensive quantity of the force equal to the velocity,  $F = V$ .

But because there is no absolute unity in bodies due to their indefinite divisibility (cf. *Anthropology*), scientists turn to infinitesimal quantities which, as I said in *Logica* and elsewhere, do not and cannot exist in nature but are a certain way we have of mentally conceiving things, as I will explain better in the philosophy of mathematics, if I am granted time to explain it. Ontology therefore which investigates the truth of ens and not purely mental entities must follow another road which, it seems to me, must be the following.

1484. Granted that the corporeal world is formed of perfectly solid atoms, so minute that they escape our senses, even when aided by instruments, we have to suppose that force is communicated by impulse to the whole atom which is impelled in instants and not successively. We must also suppose that the time lost in the communication of the motion of one body to another is lost only in the transition of the motor force from one atom to another, so that every atom, vested with force, takes a bit of time in applying pressure to the continuous atom, but then in an instant the force pervades the atom, and the pressure dissolves in the act in which the force is communicated. This hypothesis, skilfully applied, would also provide a principle for measuring the dimension of the primal atoms of matter, but I do not wish to deal with these extraneous matters; it is sufficient to mention them to the learned as other things to be investigated.

The atoms making up our body are held together by *attractive forces* coming from the animating principle, that is, from a principle different from that which is the origin of *reality*, the corporeal principle. This explains why atoms can be in contact and yet not form one sole reality. Hence, the continuity proper to the atom, which depends on the individual portion of reality given by the corporeal principle, differs totally from the

continuity of adhesion produced by the attractive and unitive force of the *animating principle*. One principle keeps separate from reality what another principle unites in cohesive contact by a force different from the force in the reality. These two kinds of forces, dependent on two different principles and therefore themselves independent, explain

1. how the communicated force finds a vehicle for its transition from one atom to another. This vehicle is the contact of two atoms;

2. how there is a tiny delay in this transition, and how it cannot be made in an instant. If the individual reality affected by the motor force is one only, the reality is understood as capable of being invaded in an instant by the force. But if the individual realities are two, the invading effort must be divided into two efforts; the first effort invades the first atom, the second, the second atom. But two efforts can be only two acts divided from each other by some tiny delay. In fact, two individual realities cannot remain in cohesive contact if they are not naturally separate. Whatever this separation by nature is, it must present some obstacle to the transition of the force and thus make the force lose some tiny amount of time.

3. We see as a consequence why the force itself, although naturally simple and unextended, employs some *time* in its communication and migration, and how in doing so, must operate through the intermittence of instantaneous invasion and of delays of effort.

#### THEOREM 5

*The animating principle of bodies possesses a motor capability which originates from the sentimentation of the body, that is, from animation itself*

1485. So far I have explained the cause of both the *rest* of bodies and the movement of simple translation. I posited the cause of rest in the operation of the corporeal principle, which adds the monad to a particular virtual point of the activity of the principle of space, and this gives the monad extension and simultaneously relative location. Having a determined

location is, for a body, a state of rest. I posited the cause of the movement of simple translation in another operation of the corporeal principle, which continuously changes the virtual point of the activity of the principle of space to which the monad attaches. Hence, the principle vests the monad with an ever new location. The identity itself of the monad is founded on its relationship with the corporeal principle which remains the same; it is therefore an identical portion of the term proper to the principle.

But in addition to the movement of simple translation there is certainly a movement produced by the animating, feeling principle of bodies. Observation shows most clearly that an animal produces spontaneous movements in its own body. Because these are the movements whose cause we are seeking, I have posited the theorem that 'the animating principle of bodies possesses a motor capability which originates from the sentimentation of the body, that is, from animation itself'.

The demonstration of the first part of this theorem, that is, of the fact, needs only simple observation together with the awareness we have of our own animality and of the motor capability to move it.

And in *Psychology* I presented the demonstration of the second part, that is, that the motor capability is contained in the sentimentation of the body.

I showed there that the motor capability pertains to the active part of the sentimentation. I distinguished two classes of movements: those arising in the matter upon the act of animation and of the organisation — we refer these movements, as to their cause, to the faculty I have called *vital motor spontaneity* — and those arising after the fundamental feeling has already been posited in being, as a consequence of feeling — we refer these movements, as to their cause, to the faculty I called *sensuous motor spontaneity* (PSY, 3: 1781–1827).

1486. *Objection* 1. You said that the motor capability pertains to the two supreme genera of animal instinct, that is, to the *vital instinct* and the *sensuous instinct*, and therefore constitutes the *active part* of a faculty whose *passive part* is feeling, according to the principle posited by you that 'every human power is passive at its beginning, and then a corresponding activity issues from this passivity'. But here on the contrary,

you are considering the faculty itself of sentimentation, and therefore feeling, as an active faculty, which has in itself the motor capability.

*Reply.* Two parts result from the analysis of feeling. In one part the real monad has been given to the principle of space, and the principle of space is *receiver*, while the corporeal principle is *giver*. When the principle of space has received the monad, it vests it with felt space, which is sentimentation. In carrying out this operation the principle of space moves spontaneously and as active. But it is provoked to this spontaneous operation by the activity of the corporeal principle, which gives it that term — *passivity* begins here. Furthermore, the real monad that is given it and stimulates it is not totally penetrated by the feeling; a part of it resists and remains in the feeling without yielding to it. The act of the feeling struggles to penetrate this resistant part and is aware of the presence of a foreign element through the resistance it meets. Hence, another element of passivity manifests itself in the operation of feeling. In the formation of the feeling therefore, there is 1. a relationship of *reception*; 2. a *first passivity* in the stimulation to the act of sentimentation, and 3. a *second passivity* in the resistance which impedes the perfect sentimentation of the received monad.

But united with these relationships of *reception* and *double experience*, there is, in the sentimentation, the active part: the feeling principle 1. responds to the stimulation with a spontaneous operation (a *first level of activity*), 2. produces the felt (a *second level of activity*), and 3. produces in the felt, or as a result of the felt, the corresponding movement in the *term as felt* or as existing in the felt. This reveals the principle's *motor spontaneity*, which is a *third level of activity*. In this way reception and experience begin and, in continuity with them, are followed by active operation.

1487. *Objection 2.* You said that the movement of simple translation operates by means of an action of the feeling principle which attaches the monad successively and in an orderly way to diverse virtual points of the corporeal principle. How then does any movement at all come about solely through the capability or force of the feeling principle without the co-operation of the corporeal principle?

*Reply.* First of all, no objection can be raised against the fact, for the simple reason it cannot be denied. Nevertheless all discussion can collapse as a result of the way the fact is explained. Now the fact is this: the feeling principle can have for its term only a felt; anything not felt is foreign to that principle. Moreover, when the principle modifies its *felt*, it simultaneously modifies and moves the *corporeal reality* present in *its felt*, and does so with a limited, particular motion (as I will explain). It does not exit from the *felt*, from its proper term, in order to influence and move the foreign reality (*PSY*, 3: 1824), which clearly shows that feeling and the act of feeling is not an empty phenomenon, a mere appearance, but is efficacious, substantial and endowed with a force which invests the reality of bodies (*PSY*, 1: 289–298). This undeniable fact has to be explained, and I have already done so when I said that the activity of the corporeal principle is present in the terminative reality still in the state of monad. When the monad is given as term to the feeling principle, the activity of the term, through this union, increases the activity of the principle, because everything that has a nature of principles and communicates with something, unifies into one sole principle, resulting from many principles or from many activities pertaining to different principles. Other than this unification no other contact, no other direct communication is possible between many principles or activities. Hence the feeling principle, to which the monad is given, acquires with the monad, or associates itself with, the activity of the principle proper to the monad, and this principle is the corporeal principle, which has the capability to move the monad.

The objector will ask why doesn't the feeling principle share in the capability of giving its body the movement of simple translation, with which in fact the corporeal principle is endowed? The answer is that the feeling principle does not unite directly with the corporeal principle so that two principles become one principle; it unites only with the final activity of the corporeal principle. The motion of simple translation or absolute motion of bodies comes solely from the corporeal principle, and the *final activity*, having only an existence relative to this principle and existing through the activity of the principle, cannot have *per se* the activity of moving; it can have only

the activity (given by the principle) of *receiving* and *preserving* the motion. If it were a case of solely receiving the motion, that is, the motor force, this would not be, strictly speaking, *action* but *reception*. But because the motion and the received motor force endure as long as the *corporeal principle* continues to impart the force to the motion and communicate it by associating itself with another reality, we see in all this a borrowed activity and the power to receive and retain it. This borrowed activity can be used by the feeling principle when the term is joined to the feeling principle. The union and communication of the term to this principle explains both its action in the term and the connection by which it can make use of the activity (whatever this is) in the term. Hence the power to make use of the activity is relative, determined and measured by the union and continuity, and not by the direct union with the corporeal principle.

1488. Two elements are therefore in the *corporeal felt*: the *subjective* and the *extrasubjective*. The first is the action and term proper to the *feeling principle*; the second, the action and term proper to the *corporeal principle*. But these two elements are individually joined; they are two realities that are in continuity with each other and form one reality. Nevertheless, because they depend on two different principles, they have two causes which have an influence on them and exercise some dominion: the corporeal principle dominates the extrasubjective reality, the *real monad*; the feeling principle dominates the subjective reality, the *extended felt*. Hence, because the two elements form one individual reality, the action of each of the two causes must make itself felt and extends its effect throughout the whole individual reality that results from the two elements.

It stands to reason therefore that if the animal body suffers some change in its extrasubjective element, its subjective element (feeling) will share in this experience, and once again we have the *passive part* of feeling. But if vice versa the subjective element (the felt) suffers some change from the action of its own principle (the subjective principle), the extrasubjective element will also feel it, will receive a movement from it, precisely because it forms one individual unit with the subjective principle, a unity variable in degree and kind.

Thus each of the two principles acts within its sphere, but because these spheres of action are individually joined, the

effect of the action of one sphere is communicated to the other sphere, that is, from one term to the other.

The corporeal principle therefore attaches the monad to whatever virtual point it pleases of the feeling principle's activity and, through the motor force, attaches it successively to other virtual points. But the feeling principle can also provide the monad with other virtual points of its own activity and thus give it the phenomenon of movement relative to itself, precisely in the way that if there were two animate gear-wheels, one of which was still, the other could move with its own movement and engage the first using the cogs it preferred, and if the first did the same while the other was still, there would be a relative movement between the two wheels produced equally by each wheel. However, the similarity is not totally the same because the supposition is that one wheel remains motionless while the other moves, whereas in our case the effect of the action of one of the two principles would extend to the two terms joined in one.

1489. We must in fact bear in mind that the feeling principle is a substance which, although it synthesises with the terminative reality which is given it and provides the occasion for carrying out its natural act, it operates with its own energy, and the act of feeling it produces does not have a nature in any way like the nature of the terminative reality. The principle therefore follows its own laws in producing the act of sentimentation, and these laws can all be summarised in this most simple law: 'The feeling principle, through its entic force, directs itself to feel more than it can.' It does so because to be, for this principle, is to feel, and the entic force of every principle gives it the tendency to be more fully than is possible. This first law divides into two which I have called laws of the sensuous instinct and the life instinct. The law of the life instinct is: 'The life instinct tends to posit in being the greatest possible fundamental feeling' (*PSY*, 3: 1785). The law of sensuous instinct is: 'The sensuous instinct tends to act in such a way that partial, momentary sensations (which arise in the fundamental feeling) become, in so far as they are pleasant, maximum, through momentary stimuli and excitation' (*PSY*, 3: 1801). Clearly, in these definitions, the direct term of the feeling principle's action is always feeling, that is, the production or increase of feeling. The production pertaining to the



life instinct is strictly speaking what I have called *sentimentation* (at least when this has the body as its term). If sentimentation concerns simply the animation of the atom, the subject performing the sentimentation is the feeling principle of space. In so far as the fundamental feeling of excitation and organisation comes about through the internal movements of many atoms grouped together, the production of these movements is not the work of the pure principle of space but of the animating, feeling principle already existing as subject in the first elements, and therefore of the sensuous instinct. The production of the sensuous instinct, which, as I said, is the increase and perfection of feeling, does not pertain to the pure feeling principle of space but to the animating, feeling principle that informs a body. The principle of space is understood in this animating principle as something generically antecedent.

But because the term of feeling is the extended body, feeling contains the corporeal reality individually united to itself. Hence every change that takes place in feeling is necessarily felt by this reality. If the corporeal reality is a single atom, the animation or sentimentation of it can give only a simple, unchangeable feeling, and the animating principle cannot cause any movement in it, nor can this principle change or increase the determined felt. Consequently, the sentimentation of an atom requires nothing more than that the corporeal principle provides and adds the atom as a monad to one of the virtual points of the activity of the principle of space. And this principle is indifferent as to whether the atom is added to it in one point rather than another, because this does not increase its feeling.

However, if the felt we are discussing is a felt that stimulates or has an organisation, it originates, increases and diminishes through the reciprocal location of many atoms in contact with each other, and therefore through a certain system of internal movements rather than through something else. Thus the reciprocal position of the atoms and molecules is no longer indifferent to the quantity of feeling, and the feeling principle that arises in this case originates from many principles associated together and unified, and tends to posit the maximum act of feeling corresponding to its term. It now makes the effort that is natural to it through its entic force, to posit this maximum act. As a result

it necessarily has an effect on the atoms and molecules which for it are one single term; it gives them the distribution and disposition which co-operates with the greatest, continued feeling for maintaining the internal movements that are more suitable for the purpose. All this explains the motor spontaneity of both the life instinct and the sensuous instinct, which can be found in *Psychology*.

*Corollary concerning the degree of independence, in sentimentation, of the feeling principle's action from the monad that is given it by the corporeal principle; also the degree of independence of the produced felt from the unyielding reality present in the felt*

1490. With this corollary I wish to note two things:

1. If the monad were not given to the feeling principle by another and foreign principle, it would never move by itself to give existence to the monad and make it felt, and thus constitute the corporeal nature. In such a case, it would not possess the term of its action and could not create it, because creating its own term would be to create itself as an ens. But a principle cannot operate unless it is an ens, and finite principles are entia only if they have the term in which they terminate and posit themselves as entia. In fact a principle without its term is something undetermined, and anything undetermined is neither infinite nor finite. It cannot subsist on its own; to subsist it must have its term. If the term is finite, we have a finite ens; if infinite, an infinite ens. But an infinite ens has an infinite term by a necessity of nature, whereas a finite ens does not exist by necessity of its nature. In its existence it has the following order: the mind conceives a principle which is not yet determined prior to the finite term which determines it. Thus, if the principle is not determined, it cannot subsist or act before having the term, and if it cannot give the term to itself, it must therefore be given to it. Consequently the principle is dependent on whatever ens it is that gives, or contributes to giving, it the term. Hence no principle can, with its entic

action, posit a finite ens in being unless it is given the term into which the action is borne and diffused.

2. The second thing I wish to note concerns the degree of dependence of the principle's entic action and its product on the term given it. Hence two questions:

*First question.* Granted a foreign term (in our case the monad), does the action of the principle on this term depend so totally on the term itself that the term determines it in every respect, or does something remain due to the spontaneity of the agent-principle such that this spontaneity operates according to its own laws not imposed on it by the foreign term?

*Second question.* Granted that the entic action of the principle is fully executed, and therefore granted its product, has this product something independent of the term which was given and which aroused the action that produced the product?

1491. The reply to the first question is found in the opinion I expressed in *Psychology*. I established that 'although a substantial principle has its existence in accordance with a term given it, nevertheless granted it already exists, it has its own activity, which does not come from, but is relative to the term' (*PSY*, 1: 706 [704]–711). The principle therefore or feeling soul certainly needs a term from outside it to diffuse and complete the act of its existence. But once it has this existence, the diffused activity is so proper to the principle that the activity operates according to particular laws, not imposed by the nature of the principle. Hence the principle is active on the term and, up to a certain point, modifies it.

This can be seen in the analysis of the fact of sentimentation, and particularly in the function of sentimentation by which the principle vests the monad with extension.

We must therefore consider what I said elsewhere in other words, that this vesting is done by two acts: one concerns the principle of pure space, the other, the feeling principle that animates the body, as follows.

1492. The monad is given to the principle of pure space and thus added to a virtual point of its activity, a point that has a certain level of intensive quantity. The principle of space which operates according to its own form (*PSY*, 1: 288–290) immediately vests the monad with a quantity of extension

proportionate to the intensive quantity of the virtual point in which the quantity was given it and thus determines its first potentially relative location, that is, in a mode that is relative to the lines that can be drawn according to the triple direction of space. This is the task of the principle of space. On the other hand, the task of the corporeal principle which gives the monad to the virtual point is to transport the monad from one virtual point to another. I call this *monadic movement*, executed outside extension. The principle of space, continuing to give the same quantity of extension to the monad in all the points to which the monad is transported, and an extension which has a relative and always different location, turns the monadic movement into the movement of the bodies which is carried out in extension and can come under our senses. All this happens through a necessity of nature, in a completely determined mode. This explains why the animating principle, even when endowed with intelligence, is not aware of its giving extension to bodies, but receives them already extended. It is in fact the principle of space, prior to the animating principle, that gives extension to the monad and simultaneously imparts feeling to it, that is, makes it felt. This act of making the monad felt is the animating principle itself that begins to exist at the very instant that the extension of bodies is produced.

1493. The extension under discussion certainly has an extensive quantity but the animating principle does not know how large the quantity is, because it has not yet determined the unit for measuring it. The measure of the extensive quantity of bodies and of the intermediate spaces is determined by the animating principle or feeling soul using comparisons made by sense by means of the retentive force, imagination and habit (*Anthropology*). Reason, by extracting this data from sense, acquires the concepts of measure with which it determines the connections between extensive quantities, helped by the wealth of the sciences of geometry and arithmetic. How these measures and the measurements of bodies and relative spaces are acquired in the order of sense and the order of reason I explained in *New Essay*.

I concluded from this by distinguishing between unmeasured extension (which is either infinite or finite, but not set against any measure) and measured extension, which is the first kind

but referred by the feeling, rational principle to a unit of measure. I am saying that if the principle of space gives extension to the external world, the animating, rational principle finds the unit of measure (and these units can be different) which it uses to check the quantity of extension of bodies and their relative spaces, and therefore their relative locations. These measures, which are formed by the acts of the feeling principle, are not natural but acquired, and because not natural, it is not nature that determines the feeling principle to apply them to the quantity of bodies and of relative spaces and consequently to their locations. These operations pertain to second acts, which is the reason why the rational, feeling principle can err in assigning measured quantity and measured location to bodies and spaces, as happens with someone who seems to experience pain in an amputated leg or thinks that a part of their body is huge, or twice the size it is.

1494. Strictly speaking, it is the principle of space that gives extensive quantity to monads. This quantity is determined and invariable, hence we say there is no error here. The feeling principle itself does not, strictly speaking, give bodies the quantity that exists contemporaneously with them. Instead, it gives to this quantity a measure and a location measured more or less accurately. Because this operation is not natural but pertains to the activity that nature achieves, it does not always operate in an invariable manner and without error. Its perfection depends on how precise the acquired measures are and how accurately they are measured against each other, and therefore reduce to one measure. It also depends on whether the data to which the measures are applied is more or less close to the extensive quantity of bodies. In fact, these measures do not apply directly to this quantity, but sometimes to certain signs of them which are taken in their place. Thus, the measures given by sight and the other three sense, hearing, smell and taste, give signs of the extensive quantity of bodies rather than the quantity itself, particularly the sense of sight (*New Essay*).

1495. The second question asks: 'After the corporeal felt has been produced through the entic action of the principle, does it have something independent of the foreign reality that aroused the principle's action?'

I said that the *felt* differs from the *foreign* activity: the former pertains to the nature of the feeling principle, the latter has a totally different nature. I also said that when a principle, after completing its act, is posited as a substantial subject, it has an activity proper to itself which does not take its laws from the terminative reality that aroused it and allowed it to complete its entic action. We can therefore conceive that when this action is complete, it continues on through its own energy, even though the terminative reality that was necessary for the principle to arouse the action, has been withdrawn. If this opinion were tenable, the feeling soul would in our case preserve its felt and hence its own existence as a subject, even though the monad has been removed, or the monads removed which at the start were necessary to arouse it. But in my view, this opinion is untenable, as I said elsewhere.

1496. To show clearly that such a proposition cannot be held, I begin by separating from it the other case I dealt with in *Psychology* (1: 676–680). There I supposed that deep in the feeling soul the intellective, rational soul arises through a certain continuity, while the feeling soul in which deep down it had arisen, also separates itself from it. In this case the intellective soul does not issue of itself from the feeling soul, as a kind of subjective development; its origin is due to a new foreign term being given to the principle. This term causes the principle to make a new, more comprehensive act and of another nature. This new soul therefore is a true creation. Hence we should not be surprised that the [new] soul endures even when the first is separated from it, precisely because the new term endures that gives it its new nature.

But the case would not be the same for the feeling soul, if the corporeal reality were taken from it; a new term would not be given it. The question then is different. We are asking whether it can still have the term, the felt, which it produced for itself, despite that the foreign reality in which it produced the term has been taken from it. I say this is impossible precisely because the action that produced the felt as a subjective term has produced and continuously produces it by acting in the foreign reality which, having been vested with extension by the principle of space, becomes felt. Consequently, if the foreign reality were removed, nothing would remain that could be vested with a

determined, finite space, and hence there would be nothing that could be felt in a space enclosed within certain limits. In fact the order of sentimentation is this: first, there is the monad; second, it is vested with finite space; third, this space is felt by a certain touch of feeling; fourth, a terminative force manifests itself in this finite space, and also an action of the feeling principle on the force. If the first in this order is removed, the rest are also removed. Consequently, the felt and its experiences cannot remain if the monad is removed.

Nevertheless we can conceive as possible that the action of the feeling principle could increase in capability and force such that it penetrated all the foreign reality and converted it all into felt. In this case, relative to the feeling principle, there would no longer be any unyielding element, nor any distinction between the felt and the reality: the feeling principle would have completely dominated the matter, which would remain totally under its control, so that it could do with it what is more conformable to the law of animal instinct that tends to maximum feeling, and therefore also do whatever the rational principle (in whose power the animal principle is) would like to do with it. In consequence, the corporeal reality would lose and acquire, according to the good pleasure of these dominating principles, solidity and impenetrability.

1497. I said that there can be two hypotheses to explain the unyielding element that remains in the corporeal felt. One of these (which I think the true one, that is, it seems to me more than an hypothesis) says that the felt seizes only the surface of the atoms and is, so to speak, their cement that unites them through cohesion and gravitation, while the internal part of the atom is not felt and remains the unyielding element. This fact is difficult to conceive because our imagination makes us think that the feeling soul dwells inside the body, and therefore we falsely deduce that it must dwell inside the atom. But if we reflect that it is far truer to say that the atom is contained in space and therefore is contained in the principle which contains space, we will see how we can so easily consider the unyielding atom to be contained in the felt which surrounds the atom without penetrating it. This supposition is supported by the undoubted fact of surface sensations which I have discussed in *Anthropology*. However, if instead of one atom we take a body composed of

many atoms, the felt certainly penetrates this composed body because it unites and cements the atoms together, and in this sense we can say that the soul is in the body.

If we pursue the hypothesis further, I cannot see any contradiction in the following: if the feeling principle makes the surfaces of atoms felt, but their internal solidity remains unyielding and not felt, and so appears to be solid and impenetrable because the action of the principle does not penetrate there, why cannot the feeling principle, granted other circumstances and causes, penetrate the internal extension of atoms, and in this way have this extension in its power?

The fact however demonstrates that, although this is not in itself absurd, it exceeds the power of nature and therefore we have no experience of it at all. But it is sufficient for us to know that no contradiction is involved, and consequently it could be done by a divine cause which could add such great efficacy to the feeling principle.

1498. Finally someone may ask whether once the foreign reality is removed, the principle would remain in the feeling principle in the form of habit and not of act. The reply must be negative. The act with which the feeling principle feels the corporeal extended, itself constitutes the principle, and relative to this [is] the first act; if this act is removed, the feeling principle can no longer be. *Habit* is not sufficient to constitute the principle because habit supposes the pre-existent subject of the principle of which it is habit, and every subject requires a first act to which habits and second acts are attached.

However it is not absurd to think that after the removal of the corporeal term some habit might remain in the principle of pure space, because relative to this principle the act of feeling the body is a second act, and the principle of space is a prior subject existing without this second act. It can therefore remain the subject of a residual habit after the second act has been removed through the removal of its term.

Similarly, there is no contradiction in thinking that the rational animal, once its body has been separated from it, can retain those habits which are a residue of the acts and experiences it had in the previous state of its union with the body (*PSY*, 1: 701–711), because here there is in the soul a subject that exists independently of the corporeal feeling's acts which,



relative to the intellective principle, acquire the nature of second acts.

THEOREM 6

*The motor power of the feeling principle or soul cannot produce absolute motion, that is, simple translation*

1499. *Introductory notions.* The supreme genera of entitative union reduce to four, according to what has been said so far.

The first genus is the direct union of principles; it has three species:

The first species is when the principle to which another unites is more comprehensive and dominant. For example, when a feeling principle unites with an intellective principle. The dominated principle loses the nature of principle or at least the nature of substantial subject and becomes an activity pertaining to the dominant principle as long as it remains united to this principle.

The second species is when the principle to which another unites is inferior in ontological quantity. It is dominated by the other, which alone becomes the substantial subject, and the first becomes one of its activities. This happens precisely when the feeling principle of the body arises deep in the principle of space and is more comprehensive than the latter, which remains in the feeling principle as a generic activity. The same happens, but to a greater degree, when the rational, intellective principle, arising deep in the feeling principle, is alone the substantial subject with its own existence, from which the feeling principle can also be separated.

Finally, the third species is when two or more principles of equal ontological level unite. This happens when their terms have the same nature: one principle is made from the two and has within itself the activity of all the principles. This is the case of the feeling principle of continuity when many atoms are put in contact with each other.

The second genus of entitative union is between a principle and a term. The term has two species: it is either unextended or extended, and if we take another base of specification, we can

distinguish two other species: a proper term or a *foreign* and therefore received term. Hence there is a union between the extended and the unextended which is twofold: either between principle and principle or between principle and unextended term. There is also a union between unextended and extended, which is the union between principle and extended term.

The union between the unextended and the extended is also of two kinds: the extended can be a proper term such as space is to its principle, and it can be a foreign, received term such as the atom to the feeling principle which feels the atom. In this second case, the two principles that is, the one that has the term as proper and the one that has the term as foreign, do not strictly speaking unite as principles; indeed they can be in opposition and conflict with each other. This is the only relationship of activity and passivity possible between the principles. It is not a direct relationship but arises because the principles have the same term in which the operation of both of them tends to produce opposite effects in the term.

The third supreme genus of entitative union is that of many terms which unite in various ways into one term. This union could not happen without the activity of the principles, which takes place in the terms. A species of this third genus of union is when the extended unites with the extended.

There is therefore a union between unextended elements, between unextended and extended elements, and between extended elements.

1500. *Demonstration.* The principle, united with the term, acts in the term. But the animating principle is united with the corporeal term solely through sentimentation. Therefore it acts in the corporeal term only in so far as it feels the term — this was asserted in the previous theorem. The feeling of the animating principle that feels the body is totally indifferent as to whether it feels the felt body in one location of space rather than in another, because the body which is its term does not change its nature or its quality because of its location in space, as we have seen. Moreover, the principle that animates and feels the body, and lacks extension (the whole of which pertains to the term), is outside space, so that location does not pertain to it or have an influence on its feeling. But because the motion of simple translation, which consists solely in the change in

location of the body without any modification to the body, does not have *per se* any relationship of sensility with the animating principle. Hence this principle cannot produce it because the connection of feeling, by which alone the feeling principle can act in its body is lacking between itself and location. Therefore it cannot produce the motion of simple translation, which we had to demonstrate.

We see the same in the fact that absolute movement is totally unfeeleable, as I demonstrated in *New Essay*. If such motion cannot be felt, it cannot be produced by the animating principle. This principle operates solely by feeling, whether with the act by which it produces feeling (as the life instinct does) or with an act which follows feeling already produced (as the sensuous instinct does).

# Appendix

## 1. (fn. 4)

[The common element in God and creatures, according to St. Thomas and the author]

Here [In I, D. 19, q, 5, a. 2, ad 1], St. Thomas is talking about what is said by way of analogy. He shows that some things are analogous according to the concept understood by the mind, but in themselves are unique. Health, for example, is unique and in human beings, but we use a differently understood concept when we say that a human being is healthy and medicine is healthy. Hence the health attributed to medicine is *analogous* to the health attributed to a human being. Some things are analogous in themselves, although the understood concept is identical. Thus, if we use the word 'body' for both a living body and a dead body, the understood concept of body is logically the same, but a dead body *in se*, in its being, is analogous to a living body because corporeity 'does not have the being of one nature in all things',\* but exists in a different mode in both. Some things are analogous relative to the understood concept and also in themselves. This is the case 'when they are not equal either in the common understood concept or in their existence.'\* This applies to substance and accident, of which the concept of ens is predicated. This concept, applied to each of them, changes in meaning; it is not predicated univocally but analogically. But considered also in themselves, substance and accident are not entia in the same way. St. Thomas concludes: 'Similarly, I say that truth and goodness and all such things are applied analogically to God and creatures. Hence, all such things must be in God according to their being, and in creatures according to their degree of perfection.'\* If common nature, truth, goodness, etc., exist in God and in creatures, but in another way and in different degree, they are not at all common. In this common, we have

to remove what is not common and find the common of the common, as I said.

The problem discussed by St. Thomas in the place I have mentioned differs greatly from mine. He is asking what can be common in God and creatures. I am asking whether that which is an abstract transcendent perfection and not a creature but stands before our mind, has something identical in God and in this sense something common. I reply affirmatively, but add that the abstract transcendent perfection we see with our mind in God is not divided, abstract and on its own. On the contrary it exists indivisibly in the divine essence, from which it can be abstracted by the divine mind and, once abstracted, communicated to us.

## 2. (1306)

### [Divine essence and creatures]

I quote these words [cf. 1306] to give the substance of the argument rather than the way the argument is expressed. The substance can be reduced to this: 'God fully knows his own essence. But he would not know it fully unless he also knew it as an object limitable by the divine mind. This limitability that this essence has in so far as known is a *virtuality* understood in the essence, a virtuality that is an enhancement, not a defect, as I have shown. The divine essence as object, when limited by the mind in the way I have described, takes on the condition of ideas, or better, typical ideas, that is, complete ideas, which indicate possible creatures.'

If instead of dealing with the substance, we wish to deal with words, diverse difficulties present themselves. I think it would therefore be helpful to mention these difficulties here. The observations I make can also help towards a correct understanding of some places of the Fathers and other Church authors.

The concept of the imitability, by creatures, of the divine essence presupposes that the creatures imitating it are themselves at least possible; in other words, they are in the ideas. But

it is precisely at this point that we must explain how the ideas, that is, possible creatures, can be in God. The literal expression therefore involves a vicious circle; it would be saying: 'The divine essence is the ideas in so far as the essence is imitable by creatures. Creatures, in so far as possible, are the ideas, and in so far as real, are created according to the ideas.' If in fact creatures imitate the divine essence, they already are, at least as possible, that is, as ideas. If they already are, their existence needs no explanation.'

To explain possible creatures therefore, that is, the ideas, we must turn to free, divine intelligence which has the virtue to limit the divine essence as known and limit its object, and also to limit it so as to have from it the types of finite entia. Granted these types, we see some kind of *analogical similarity* between them and the divine essence because they originated from the limitation of the essence and from a limitation applied according to a rule given to our mind by *abstract ens*, and abstract ens retains an analogical similarity with absolute ens from which it is abstracted. There was also another rule due to the complexity of the types, the rule of *order*. This order unifies them all, and thus imitates the unity of absolute ens in so far as this unity can be imitated by many limited entia.

### 3. (fn. 51)

[Aristotle and the double meaning of 'feelable']

On the contrary, what Aristotle said must be understood in another way, that is, *sensibile in actu est sensus in actu* [the feelable in act is feeling in act]. He incorrectly joins together this statement and what he says about the intellect, as if they meant the same thing. The *feelable in act* however, that is, what is in feeling, is simply the *term* of the act of feeling. And in the case of the feelable which results from particular sensations, it is a modification of the fundamental term and forms one thing with the sense-principle, just as a term forms one thing with the principle to which it is indivisibly united. If we consider irrational animals, they have in this *feelable element* nothing more than 1. a

[*App.*, 3]

modification of their own term, and 2. an experience, that is, they receive into themselves a modifying action whose cause is something other. Animals do not feel this other element according to its subjective and substantial existence; they feel within themselves only its *action* that modifies them. But an ens that is not only sensitive but intelligent accepts the *feelable in act*, the felt element, that is, its modified term, as a *sign* of what has caused the modification and is another and different ens. Thus, intelligence accepts the felt *action* as a sign of the ens that exercises the action in it, and starting from this comes to know the subjective existence of the ens. It then specifies and determines this subject-ens through the experienced, feelable action. But if there is no intelligence, the feeling ens terminates its act in its own passive term. Hence, the pure *feelable in act* is certainly feeling in act when feeling is understood as the term of a sense-principle, except it experiences the action of something other, an action that takes place in it. Nevertheless, when the *feelable in act* is a *natural sign* used by intelligence to know the external ens that has produced the feelable, then this external ens, the direct cause of the feelable action, is usually called *feelable*. But this meaning of 'feelable' is incorrect because it indicates not only the feelable as such but the feelable relative to the understanding which uses it to complete its intellectual operation. Aristotle confuses these two meanings of the word and consequently often makes the *feelable* equal to the *intelligible*. The intelligible *in se* however in act is something different from the human intelligent being in act, as I have said, and only the divine intellect determines that it is not absolutely something different but becomes something different only relatively. Aristotle did not notice this double meaning which we as intellective entia give to the word 'feelable', according as we consider it purely in itself or as a *sign* which our intelligence uses. As a result he was obliged to grant to feeling a first level of intelligence, stating that *sensus cognoscitivus est, quia receptivus est specierum sine materia* [feeling is cognizant because it is susceptible of species without matter] (*De Anima*, 2, et de sensu). He thus gives some true *species* to feeling in addition to giving them to intelligence, but the feelable does not become a meaningful species of material ens until our understanding makes use of it.

## 4. (1315a)

[Ideal relationships according to Cajetan and St. Thomas]

This was certainly the way Cajetan considered these *relationships* when he wrote that God does not need *ideal relationships* in order to know creatures distinctly. But according to St. Thomas, God has to have *ideas* in order to know creatures distinctly, and when known in this way, so that they can serve him as an exemplar of creation, 'just as the builder,' says St. Thomas, 'understanding the form of the house in its material, is said to understand the house. But in understanding the form of the house, as envisaged by him, he understands the idea or nature of the house because he understands that he understands the form,'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 15, art. 2, ad 2). Clearly, it is the idea that makes the house understood. St. Thomas argues therefore that if God is to know created things, each thing distinct according to its concept and nature, we must admit many ideas in him. But he then asks how can they be many if God's essence is one, with which he knows everything? He replies that God's essence has different relationships to different things and that through these relationships *multiplicantur ideae* [ideas are multiplied] (*ibid.*, ad 3). Hence, if the relationships are necessary in order to make ideas many, and if they must be many in order that God may know things distinctly, then these *different relationships* are necessary for the distinct knowledge God has of things. How then could Cajetan write: 'The result is that ideal relationships are not posited necessarily so that God may understand creatures distinctly, as certain people seem to think. The perfection of divine intellection certainly does not go begging for rational relationships; they are considered necessary because necessarily constituted by the perfection of divine intellection'?\* He writes acutely in this way because he considers the *relationships* in their abstraction, as something midway between God and creatures, and hence calls them ideas. But the *relationships* which distinguish ideas, in the sense of St. Thomas, are properly speaking only the act of divine intellection which creates things, limiting and distinguishing them — knowledge does not precede this act but is the creating act itself. If we grant a reflection



and abstraction, this act can be followed by the abstract *ideal relationships* Cajetan speaks about, which are certainly not necessary for divine knowledge of things but are a result of this knowledge.

## 5. (1319)

[St. Thomas and the concept of the intellect]

In a part of the disputed questions (*De pot.*, q. 8, art. 1) and in the work *De intellectu et intelligibili*, which appears to be an extract of the opinions of the holy Doctor, St. Thomas says: 'The understanding can be ordered to four things in its understanding: to the *thing* understood, to the intelligible *species* with which the intellect posits itself in act, to its *understanding* and to the *concept* of the intellect.' Here he is not speaking about *ideas*, nor does he take the concept of the intellect (*conceptio intellectus*) to mean the word of the mind. He distinguishes this *concept* from the *thing understood* because sometimes (*interdum*) the thing understood is outside the intellect, whereas the concept is always in the intellect. He says that the intellect forms the *concept* in order to know the thing understood: 'For this reason the intellect forms the concept of the thing so that it may know the thing understood.\*' It distinguishes the thing from the intelligible species with which the intellect is posited in act because this species is considered as the principle of action of the intellect (*principium actionis intellectus*). The concept, on the other hand, is considered as the term of the action and as the thing constituted by the intellect in itself: 'The concept is considered as the term of the action and as something constituted through the action.\*' Finally, *understanding* is the action of the intellect.

In this analysis therefore four things are distinguished: 1. the principle of understanding (Latin *species*); 2. the internal term of understanding (*conceptio seu verbum* [the concept or word]), 3. the action of the understanding (*intelligere*), and 4. the thing understood (*res intellecta*). But the thing understood is twofold and hence appears twice in St. Thomas' argument, as a purely

understood object and as a subject subsistent in itself. As a purely understood object it is the species which informs the intellect. Taken in this sense St. Thomas next says: 'But the form of the intellect is the thing understood,'\* whereas he had first said this of the species: '(The intellect) is set in act through some form which must be the principle of the action.'\* This species or form is what I call essence or idea of the thing simply intuited by us. But because the thing, besides being a *purely understood object* (which is St. Thomas' *intelligible being*), also subsists in itself subjectively, the *thing understood* as object needs to be known in another way as subsistent in itself, that is, in its *natural being*, which is obtained by the *word*. St. Thomas expresses this as: 'Because of this the intellect forms the CONCEPT OF THE THING' (that is, the word) 'so that it may know' (as existing in itself) 'the THING UNDERSTOOD'\* (as object, species, idea, essence). Here it seems that also according to St. Thomas, the word has the role of making things known as existing in themselves. On the other hand, species or idea makes things known only as internal objects of the mind, and the word already supposes the thing understood in its essence. This first understanding of the thing is, as I said, the principle or beginning of knowledge of the thing, knowledge which is then completed with the word, just as the thing is completed with subjective existence in itself. The divine intellect is not completed or actuated through the species as if the species were distinct from it, as in the case of the human intellect (St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I, q. 14, art. 2, ad 2 and 3), but if 'species' means the actuality of the intellect, we can say that the intellect is the subsistent species: 'The divine intellect is intelligible by means of the species'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 14, arts. 2 and 4). This species however is something quite different from the *species* of the human intellect which does not make the subsistent thing known. To accommodate this somewhat ambiguous way of speaking, the Scholastics distinguished two meanings of 'species' and invented the expressions *species impressa* [impressed species] and *species expressa* [expressed species]. They said that the first was impressed on the intellect *per modum formae quiescentis et manentis* [in the manner of a resident, quiescent form], which they called *principium intellectionis* [principle of understanding]. The second was a *conceptio* [concept] or 'an species formed by the intellect and

was in it in the manner of emanation’\* and called it *terminus intellectionis* [term of understanding], that is, *verbum* [word] (cf. St. Thomas in I, Dist. 27, q. 2, 2, 3). But the simplest and clearest way to speak is to establish that what we understand by *species* and *idea* does not strictly speaking fit God. All we need say about God is: ‘Subsistent understanding is one and is God’\*, as St. Thomas states (*S.T.*, I, q. 54, art. 1), and that this subsistent intellection has a Word. This Word, in so far as in the understanding as the understanding’s essential constitutive, is the essential wisdom of God, and in so far as subsisting with its own subsistence is the Word co-eternal with the Father who generates him with the intellection that the Father himself is.

## 6. (fn. 92)

[St. Thomas and the relationship between ideas, divine skill and exemplar in creation]

In this same passage [*In Ep. ad Coloss.*, c. 1, lect. 4], St. Thomas speaks solely of divine *skill*, not of ideas; he also posits the exemplar in the Word, not in ideas. However, in the *Summa* he says that ideas are used as exemplar (cf. I, q. 14, art. 1), and in the same place in the *Summa* (art. 2, ad 2) he distinguishes between *idea* and divine *skill*: ‘Wisdom and skill are understood as that by which God understands; idea, as what he understands.’\* In the passage quoted from the letter to the Colossians, he attributes *exemplar*-being to skill and wisdom which are not an *idea*, whereas in the *Summa* he says the idea serves as exemplar. Such inconsistencies are a necessary result of having to use the words of the ancient philosophers: the words are neither fully defined, nor adequate for Christianity’s sublime teaching about God. The passage from the *Summa* continues: ‘But God understands many things with one understanding, not only as they are in themselves but as they are understood, that is, he understands the many natures of things’\* St. Thomas distinguishes two kinds of knowledge in God: 1. *direct knowledge* of many things, and 2. *reflective knowledge* of the relationships between these many things and

the divine essence. Direct knowledge of many created things is not carried out in God by way of ideas but by way of *skill*, by which, knowing created things, he creates them. Reflective knowledge of the relationships between these many things and the divine essence constitutes the many *ideas* in so far as, according to St. Thomas, the idea serves 'as a principle of knowledge of the thing in the way that the forms of knowable things are said to be in the knower'\* (*S.T.*, I, q. 15, art. 1). God therefore does not know and create many things with these ideas, which are the distinct *natures* of created things, but with the known relationships (*respectus intellecti a Deo* [the relationships understood by God], *ibid.*, art. 2, ad 4), and these follow from the knowledge and creation of many things. *The relationships* are certainly in the things themselves as known, to which alone not only multiplicity and distinction pertain but also the relationships they have with the divine essence. The relationships are therefore co-created with the things, and thus do not harm divine simplicity. We must also remember that both direct and reflective knowledge are effected in God by a single act, or rather, they are a single act. With this act God knows and creates things, and at the same time knows with them the relationships between created things and the divine essence: the knowledge of things already contains the knowledge of relationships. If this were not the case, the knowledge of things would not be perfect, because knowledge of their origin would be lacking.

There will also be confusion when we see that the natures proper to many things ('many natures proper to many things which are many ideas'\*) sometimes reduce to the divine essence, sometimes are said to be made in the Word as in the exemplar, and sometimes in the divine *skill* when this is taken as the Word. Properly speaking, skill means the intelligent operative principle endowed with all that is necessary for it to be such. This operative principle is the divine essence common to the three persons, and if understood as generating the Word, is the Father. The intellective operative principle understands itself, and communicates this knowledge, which remains in it, to the other persons. This knowledge therefore pertains to the essence. But if we understand that the understood self is in the subsistence that it has relative to the intelligent principle (in this relationship it is called 'Generated'), it is the Word. The

intellective operative principle therefore creates things whether considered as essence, in which case creation is common to the three persons, or whether considered as Father, in which case creation is attributed to the Father because the operative principle which creates in so far as it generates the Word, is the Father. The things understood are understood in the understood divine essence as in an exemplar, but the exemplar is attributed to the Word because the understood divine essence, not as understood but as subsisting *in se*, as understood, is the Son or Word. Hence, all things are made through the divine essence and understood in that essence, which is the Word.

# Original Language References

## Quotations in numbered Paragraphs:

1181. *oportet quod natura communis habeat aliquod esse in unoquoque de quibus dicitur, sed differens secundum rationem maioris vel minoris perfectionis.*
1258. *paternitas ex quo omnis paternitas in caelis et in terra nominator.*
1288. *Deus dat esse, aliae vero causae determinant illud.*
1302. καὶ ταύτης (συστοιχίας) ἡ οὐσία πρώτη, καὶ ταύτης ἡ ἀπλῶς, καὶ κατ' ἐνέργειαν.
1311. *quanto perfectius est cognitum in cognoscente, tanto perfectior est modus cognitionis.*
1313. *intelligere non est actio progrediens ad aliquid extrinsecum sed manet in operante, sicut actus et perfectio eius, prout esse et perfectio existentis; sicut enim esse consequitur formam, ita intelligere sequitur speciem intelligibilem.*
1314. *Per ideas intelliguntur formae aliarum rerum praeter ipsas res existentes.*  
*qua fit intellectus in actu. Haec igitur similitudo se habet in intelligendo sicut intelligendi principium.*  
*Non est autem contra simplicitatem divini intellectus quod species eius intellectus formaretur.*
1315. *Unde idea in Deo nihil est aliud quam Dei essentia.*
- 1315a. *Deus non solum intelligit multas res per essentiam suam, sed etiam intelligit se intelligere multa per essentiam suam. Sed hoc est intelligere plures rationes rerum, vel plures ideas esse in intellectu eius sicut intellectas.*
1321. *oritur quidem ab intellectu per suum actum, est vero similitudo rei intellectae.*

1325. *Ipsum esse causae agentis primae scilicet Dei, est eius intelligere. Unde quicumque effectus praeexistunt in Deo sicut in causa prima, necesse est, quod sint in ipso eius intelligere, et quod omnia in eo sint secundum intelligibilem. Nam omne quod est in altero, est in eo secundum modum eius, in quo est.*

1326. *Platonici ponebant ideas dicentes: quod quaelibet res fiebat ex eo quod participat idam, puta hominis, vel alicuius alterius speciei. Loco enim harum idearum, nos habemus unum, scilicet Filium, Verbum Dei.*

*Platonici errant etiam hic, dicebant enim in rebus diversas esse perfectionis, et quamlibet attribuebant uni primo principio, et secundum ordines earum perfectionum ponebant ordines principiorum, sicut ponebant primum ens a quo participant omnia esse, et aliud principium ab isto, scilicet primum intellectum quo omnia participant vivere. Sed nos non sic ponimus, sed ab uno principio res habent quidquid in eis perfectionis est.*

1327. *Deus omnia in sua sapientia dicitur facere, quia sapientia Dei se habet ad res creatas sicut ars aedificatoris ad domum factam. Haec autem forma et sapientia es Verbum, et ideo omnia in ipso condita sunt, sicut in quodam exemplari.*

1329. πάντα συμπεράσματα πάντων τῶν ὄντων συνέχων καὶ προέχων.

1330. ποιήσιν αὐτοτελεῖ ἰδίον τοῦ ἰδίου Θεοῦ.

1332. κατὰ μίαν τὴν πάντων ἐξηρημενὴν ἔνωσιν.

1334. *quidquid recipitur ad instar recipientis recipitur.*

1335. *Cognoscentia a non cognoscentibus in hoc distinguuntur, quoisia non cognoscentia nihil habent nisi formam suam tantum, sed cognoscens natum est habere formam etiam rei alterius, nam species cogniti est in cognoscente.*

Καὶ ἔστιν ὁ μὲν τοιοῦτος νοῦς, τῷ πάντα γίνεσθαι ὁ δὲ, τῷ πάντα ποιεῖν.

1341. τὸ δὲ εἶναι, οἷον ἔμφρασιν ἔχει τινὰ, προϋπόντος αἰτίου.

τὸ οὖν εἶναι κατ' ἐπίνοιαν, ἐκ μετοχῆς ὑπέστη τοῦ προσεῖναι αὐτοῦ.

1382. *Universa propter semetipsum operatus est Dominus.*

1388. *et ipse est caput corporis ecclesiae, qui est principium.*

*Nam quos praescivit, et praedestinavit conformes fieri imaginis Filii sui, ut sit ipse primogenitus in multis fratribus Nam quos praescivit, et praedestinavit conformes fieri imaginis Filii sui, ut sit ipse primogenitus in multis fratribus.*

*Numquid de bobus est cura Deo.*

*Mysterium quod absconditum fuit a seculis, et generationibus, nunc autem manifestum est sanctis eius.*

*Non pro mundo rogo.*

*sed pro his quos dedisti mihi, quia tui sunt.*

*quos dedisti mihi.*

*quia tui sunt.*

1393. *quem Pater sanctificavit et misit in mundum.*

*Filius Dei in virtute secundum spiritum sanctificationis.*

*Complacuit designat quod dona hominis Chisti non erant ex fato, seu meritis, ut dicit Fotinus, sed ex divinae voluntatis complacentia assumptis hunc hominem in unitatem persona.*

*de Filio suo qui factus est ei ex semine David secundum carnem.*

*Manifestum est autem quod aliquis ex participatione Verbi Dei fit Deus participative.*

*Et non dico vobis quia ego rogabo Patrem de vobis, ipse enim Pater amat vos, quia vos me amastis et credidistis quia ego a Deo exivi.*

*ut dilectio, qua dilexisti me, in ipsis sit, et ego in ipsis.*



## Quotations in numbered Footnotes:

2. *Infinitum secundum quod se tenet ex parte formae non determinatae per materiam habet rationem perfecti.*
3. *Commune, quantum est de se, non determinat rei communitatem, vel rationis, sicut universale, et ideo essentia (divina) potest dici communis, non autem universalis.*
17. *Natura autem Dei est ipsum esse intelligere, et sic oportet quod eius generatio vel conceptio intellectualis, sit generatio vel conceptio naturae eius. In nobis autem conceptio intelligibilis non est conceptio naturae nostrae, quia in nobis aliud est intelligere et natura nostra.*
20. *liberum arbitrium facultatem communem sonat intellectus et voluntatis, cum dicat quid compositum ex libertate et arbitrio.*
24. *Voluntas divina libertatem habet, et ex hoc convenit sibi quod sit ad utrumlibet, sed super hoc habet immutabilitatem, ut ei quod vult immobiliter adhaereat... et propter hoc non est dicendum quod sit causa contingens, quia contingentia mutabilitatem important.*  
*Voluntas Dei se habet ad utrumlibet, non per modum mutabilitatis, ut posit aliquid prius velle et postmodum nolle; sed potius per modum libertatis, quia actus voluntatis suae semper est in potestate eius.*
25. *nihil prohibet, simul et in eodem instanti esse terminum creationis et terminum liberi arbitrii.*  
*illa operatio quae simul incipit cum esse rei, est ei ab agente a quo habet esse.*
28. Διο ἔνιοι ποιοῦσιν ἀεὶ ἐνέργειαν, οἷον Λεύκιππος καὶ Πλάτων.
33. μεγάλης τινὸς διάνοιας ἔκγονον εἶναι τὸν Δία... ἔστι δὲ οὗτος Ὠφρανοῦ υἱός, ὡς λόγος.
41. *Nam intelligere aliquid in communi et non in speciali, est imperfecte aliquid cognoscere.*
43. *Intellectus noster, dum de potentia in actum reducit, pertingit prius ad cognitionem universalem confusam de*

*rebus, quam ad propriam rerum cognitionem, sicut de imperfecto ad perfectum procedens, ut patet in primo Physicorum. Si igitur cognitio Dei de rebus aliis a se esset in universali tantum et non in speciali, sequeretur quod eius intelligere non esset omnibus modis perfectum et per consequens eius esse.*

44. *Cum virtus activa Dei se extendat non solum ad formas, a quibus accipitur ratio universalis, sed etiam usque ad materiam, necesse est, quod scientia Dei usque ad singularia se extendat, quae per materiam individuantur. Cum enim sciat alia a se per essentiam suam, in quantum est similitudo rerum, vel ut principium activum earum, necesse est, quod essentia sua sit principium sufficiens cognoscendi omnia, quae per ipsum fiunt, non solum in universali sed etiam in singulari. Et esset simile de scientia artificis, si esset productiva totius rei, et non formae tantum.*
45. *Et sic omnia in Deo praeexistunt non solum quantum ad id quod commune est omnibus, sed etiam quantum ad ea, secundum quae res distinguuntur.*
46. *Scientia Dei est causa rerum secundum quod res sunt in scientia.*
47. *In quibusdam enim agentibus praeexistit forma rei fiendae secundum ESSE NATURALE, sicut in his quae agunt per naturam, sicut homo generat hominem et ignis ignem. In quibusdam vero secundum ESSE INTELLIGIBILE, ut in his quae agant per intellectum, sicut SIMILITUDO domus praeexistit in mente aedificatoris.*
48. *Cum ipsa sua essentia sit etiam species intelligibilis, ut dictum est, ex necessitate sequitur, quod ipsum eius intelligere sit eius essentia, et eius esse.*
52. *Ex hoc enim quod intellectum fit unum cum intelligente, consequitur intelligere quasi quidam effectus differens ab utroque.*

*Solum esse divinum, est suum intelligere, et suum velle.*

54. *Id quod est per se intellectum non est res illa cuius notitia per intellectum habetur, cum illa sit intellecta quandoque*

*in potentia tantum, et sit extra intelligentem, sicut cum homo intelligit res naturales... cum tamen oportet quod intellectum sit in intelligente et unum cum ipso, nec etiam intellectum per se est et similitudo rei inintellectae per quam informatur intellectus ad intelligendum.*

55. *Eorum quae neque sunt, neque erunt, neque faciunt, Deus non habet practicam cognitionem, nisi virtute tantum. Unde respectu eorum non est idea in Deo secundum quod idea significat exemplar, sed solum secundum quod significat rationem.*

*principium cognitionis ipsius secundum quod formae cognoscibilem dicuntur esse in cognoscente.*

*relationes quae dicuntur de Deo ad creaturam non sunt realiter in ipso.*

59. *Forma autem rei praeter ipsam existens ad duo esse potest, vel ut sit exemplar eius cuius dicitur forma, vel ut sit principium cognitionis ipsius secundum quod forma cognoscibilem dicuntur esse in cognoscente.*

61. *Similiter cum litera dixisset, quod idea est principium cognitionis, statim addidit limitationem, secundum quod formae cognoscibilem dicuntur esse in cognoscente, quasi diceret: non dico quod idea est principium cognitionis, quia hoc sonaret quod ipsa esset ratio cognoscendi, ut species intelligibilis, sed quod ipsa est principium cognitionis eo modo quo formae cognoscibilem obiective in cognoscente existentes, principia cognitionis ipsarum rerum cognoscibilem dicuntur.*

62. *Sicut aedificator speciem domus concipere non posset, nisi apud ipsum esset propria ratio cuiuslibet partium eius.*

63. *Id autem quod est per se intellectum non est res illa, cuius notitia per intellectum habetur etc. Intellectus enim non potest intelligere nisi secundum quod fit actu per hanc similitudinem etc.*

67. *Huiusmodi respectus, quibus multiplicantur ideae, non causantur a rebus, se ab intellectus divino, comparante essentiam suam ad res.*

69. *Absolute loquendo, non est necesse Deum velle aliquid nisi se ipsum.*

71. *non est contra simplicitatem divini intellectus quod multa intelligat.*

*respectus multiplicantes ideas non sunt in rebus creatis sed in Deo, non tamen sunt reales respectus, sicut illi quibus distinguuntur personae, sed respectus intellecti a Deo.*

72. *non esse possibile nisi meras ideas Dei, communi sensui et sermoni adversari evidentissime patet. Universi homines res possibile ab rebus existentibus dividunt: aiunt vulgo, Deum ante creationem reliquisse entia in pura possibilitate; creando dare entibus existentiam; posse quae extant ad statum primitivum reducere.*

73. *quemadmodum verum divinum est, quod Deus dum cognoscit, disponit et gignit; ita verum humanum sit, quod homo, dum novit, componit item ac facit: et eo pacto scientia sit cognitio generis, seu modi, quo res fiat, et qua, dum mens cognoscit modum quia elementa componit, rem faciat; solidam Deus, quia comprehendit omnia, planam homo quia comprehendit extima.*

74. *Sapientes vero docent, quod in essentia divina continentur omnia indistincte et elevate, ut effectus in causis eminentibus, sic tamen perfecte, ac si distincte continerentur. Et quoniam hoc procul dubio est verum, ut naturae causarum ostendunt; ex hoc parere potest quod essentia divina, ut species intelligibilis non repraesentat alia immediate, sed mediante se ipsa ut obiecto: habet enim se ad alia sicut species causae ad effectus, ad quos causa illa se potest extendere.*

75. *Omnia in Deo praeexistunt, non solum quantum ad id quod commune est omnibus, sed etiam quantum ad ea, secundum quae res distinguuntur. Et sic cum Deus in se omnes perfectiones contineat, comparatur Dei essentia ad omnes rerum essentias, non sicut commune ad propria, vel ut unitas ad numeros, vel centrum ad lineas; sed sicut perfectus actus ad imperfectos, ut si dicerem: homo ad animal, vel senarius, qui est numerus perfectus, ad*

*imperfectos sub ipso contentos. Manifestum est autem quod per actum perfectum cognosci possunt actus imperfecti, non solum in communi, sed etiam propria cognitione. Sicut qui cognoscit hominem, cognoscit animal propria cognitione, et qui cognoscit senarium cognoscit trinarium propria cognitione. Sic igitur cum essentia Dei labeat in se quidquid perfectionis habet essentia cuiuscumque rei alterius et adhuc amplius, Deus in se ipso potest omnia propria cognitione cognoscere.*

79. *Relatio autem in Deo est substantia eius.*

80. *Oppositio relationis... ex neutra parte importat imperfectionem.*

82. *Intellectus enim sua actione format rei definitionem, vel etiam propositionem affirmativam vel negativam. Haec autem conceptio intellectus in nobis proprie verbum dicitur.*

83. *virtutes cognoscitivae per se subsistentes cognoscunt ipsas.*

*Ex hoc enim aliquid in actu sentimus, vel intelligimus, quod intellectus noster, vel sensus informatur in actu per speciem sensibilis, vel intelligibilis. Et secundum hoc tantum sensus vel intellectus aliud est a sensibili vel intelligibili: quia utrumque est in potentia.*

84. *Secundum quid autem infinitum est sentire, quod se habet ad omnia sensibilia, sicut visus ad omnia visibilia.*

85. *Filius in divinis repraesentatur aliquo modo, sed deficienter per verbum mentis nostrae.*

86. *similitudo, ne unioni detur occasio, sancta est: sed tibi a me non concedenda est: quia aequalem eundem et similem postea pie fatebor.*

98. *Platonici ponentes Deum esse totius causam, quia credebant quod idem non esset esse causa plurium secundum propria, in quibus differunt, sed solum secundum id, quod est in omnibus commune posuerunt quasdam secundas causas, per quas res ad proprias naturas determinantur, et quae communiter esse a Deo recipiunt, et has causas, exemplaria rerum vocabant, sicut exemplar*

*hominis dicebant quidem hominem separatum, qui esset causa humanitatis omnibus singularibus hominibus, et similiter de aliis.*

101. *Omnis scientia habetur per aliqua principia per se nota, et per consequens visa, et ideo oportet quaecumque sunt scita, aliquod modo esse visa.*

102. *Oculus enim non cognoscit lapidem, secundum esse quod habet in oculo, sed per speciem lapidis quam habet in se, cognoscit lapidem secundum esse, quod habet extra oculum.*

103. Πασῶν μὲν οὖν κοινὸν τῶν ἀρχῶν, τὸ πρῶτον εἶναι, ὅθεν ἢ ἐστὶν ἢ γίνεται, ἢ γινώσκεται.

108. *hominem autem vulgo describebant animantem rationis participem, non compotem, usquequaque. Unde mentis humanae cogitatio, divinae autem, intelligentia sit propria; quod Deus omnia elementa rerum legit, cum extima tum intima, quia continet et disponit: mens autem humana, quia terminata est, et extra res ceteras omnes, quae ipsa non sunt, rerum dumtaxt extrema coactum eat, nunquam omnia colligat; ita ut de rebus cogitare quidem possit, intelligere autem non possit, quare particeps sit rationis, non compos.*

112. Οὐκ ὡς μερισθέντος τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς τὸ εἶναι καὶ προεῖναι, ἀλλὰ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ τὸ παραγαγὼν εἰς τὸ εἶναι τὰ ὄντα, τοῦτο λέγεται εἶναι προὔποσταν ἐν τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ τούτου τοῦ θείου θελήματος, εἰς τὸ εἶναι κτίσιν προορισθέντος, εἰκότος πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ὧν μετέχει τὰ ὄντα τοῦ Θεοῦ, πρεσβυτέρα τις ἀρχὴ ἢ τοῦ εἶναι, ἐπινοεῖται αὐτος ὁ Θεός.

119. *Tum vero quidquid illud est, in quo inesse cogitatur, ab eo non distinguitur; nec id tamquam superfusa qualitas informat. Alioqui vel cogitatione separari ab eo, divellique poterit; neque perfecta sic erit, ut non perfectiorem, animo, fingere liceat.*

124. *Veritatum duplex genus: alterum scientiam, alterum persuasionem parit.*

125. Ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἡ σοφία περὶ τινος αἰτίας καὶ ἀρχάς ἐστιν ἐπιστήμη, δῆλον.

126. Διὸ καὶ δικαίως ἂν οὐκ ἀνθρωπίνη νομίζοιτο αὐτῆς ἡ κτῆσις·  
πολλαχῇ γὰρ ἡ φύσις δούλη τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐστίν· ὥστε κατὰ  
Σιμωνίδην, θεὸς ἂν μόνος τοῦτο ἔχοι τὸ γέρας.
130. *Tota consideratio scientiarum speculativarum non potest  
ultra extendi, quam sensibilibus cognitio ducere potest.  
In cognitione autem sensibilibus non potest consistere  
ultima homini beatitudo, quae est ultima eius perfectio.  
Non enim aliquid perficitur ab aliquo inferiori, nisi  
secundum quod in inferiori est aliqua participatio  
superioris. ... Unde per formam lapidis non perficitur  
intellectus in quantum est talis forma, sed in quantum in  
ea participatur aliquid simile alicui, quod est supra  
intellectum humanum, scilicet lumen intelligibile, vel  
aliquid huiusmodi. ... Unde relinquitur quod hominis  
ultima beatitudo non possit esse in consideratione  
speculativarum scientiarum. Sed sicut in formis sensi-  
bilibus participatur aliqua similitudo substantiarum  
superiorum, ita consideratio scientiarum specula-  
tivarum est quaedam participatio verae et perfectae  
beatitudinis.*
131. *Felicitas autem ultima, scilicet contemplativa, in eius  
(intellectus speulativi) actu consistit, unde actus  
speculativi intellectus sunt propinquiore felicitate  
ultimae per modum similitudinis, quam habitus practici  
intellectus, licet habitus intellectus practici fortasse sint  
propinquiore per modum praeparationis, vel per  
modum meriti.*
132. *quibus recte colligitur actionem a libertate non posse  
sejungi et agens necessarium vere non esse agens. Quod  
quidem non absolute intelligendum est, sed de libertate  
a coactione, quae nempe a coactione extrema immunis  
est, de necessitate insuper, quam vis externa obtrudit.*
133. *potentia Dei, cum sit infinita, non magis determinatur ad  
hoc quam ad illud, ... unde oportet quod supra rationem  
potentiae sit aliquid aliud, per quod opus determinetur.  
Hoc autem fit per scientiam, quae propriam rationem  
rei cognoscit. Sed quia scientia se habet ad opposita, est  
enim et bonorum et malorum, ideo oportet aliquid  
adhuc addere in quo perficiatur ratio causae, et hoc est*

*voluntas quae determinate accipit unum ex duobus quae scit vel quae potest. Unde perfecta ratio causalitatis in his quae non agunt ex necessitate naturae invenitur primo in voluntate ut dicit Philosophus in IX Metaphysicorum, et haec convenit voluntati in quantum obiectum eius est finis.*

135. Ἀρχὴ ἣ μὲν λέγεται, ὅθεν ἄν τι τοῦ πράγματος κινηθεῖς πρῶτον.

136. *esse autem in executione non est finis, sed terminus, et effectus, tam finis quam efficientis.*

138. Καὶ ὅτι τῷ εἶναι τὸ ἀγαθόν, ὡς οὐσιῶδες, ἀγαθόν, εἰς πάντα τὰ ὄντα διατείνει τὴν ἀγαθότητα.

139. *Bonum dicitur diffusivum per modum finis, secundum quod dicitur quod finis movet efficientem, non autem sic Pater est principium divinitatis, sed magis per modum efficientis.*

141. Τετάρτην (αἰτίαν)... καὶ τὸ οὗ ἐνέκεν, καὶ τὸ ἀγαθόν. τέλος γὰρ γενέσεος πάσης τοῦτο ἐστί.

*Utrum bonum formaliter sit formaliter ipsa ratio finis in actu exercito, idest exerceat causalitaten finalem.*

143. *bonum dicitur diffusivum sui esse eo modo, quo finis dicitur movere.*

161. *cum dicitur 'factus est', non intelligitur secundum conversionem, sed secundum unionem absque divina mutatione. Potest enim aliquid de novo dici relative de aliquod absque eius immutatione, puta aliquis immutabiliter sedens, fit dexter per mutationem eius qui transfertur.*

168. *En disant un tel être existe pour cette fin, on peut dire une chose plausible et même évident; en disant un tel être n'existe que pour cette fin, on peut dire une absurdité.*

174. *nous reconnaissons toujours que ce changement (de l'état de repos à l'état de mouvement) est dû à l'action d'une cause étrangère, ou sans laquelle nous concevons que ce corps pourrait d'ailleurs exister.*



## Quotations in the Appendix:

- No. 1. *non habet esse unius rationis in omnibus.*

*quando neque parificantur in intentione communi, neque in esse.*

*Et similiter dico quod veritas et bonitas et omnia huiusmodi dicuntur analogice de Deo et creaturis. Unde oportet quod secundum suum esse omnia haec in Deo sint, et in creaturis secundum rationem maioris perfectionis et minoris.*

- No. 4. *sicut artifex dum intelligit formam domus in materia, dicitur intelligere domum; dum tamen intelligit formam domus ut a se speculatam, ex eo quod intelligit se intelligere eam, intelligit ideam vel rationem domus.*

*Ex hoc autem habes quod respectus ideales non ponuntur necessarie ad hoc, ut Deus distincte intelligat creaturas, ut quidam interpretari videntur. Constat enim quod perfectio intellectionis divinae non mendicat a respectibus rationis, sed ponuntur necessarii ut necessario constitute ex perfectione intellectionis divinae.*

- No. 5. *propter hoc enim intellectus conceptionem rei in se format, ut rem intellectam cognoscat.*

*praedicta conceptio consideratur ut terminus actionis et quasi quoddam per ipsam constitutum.*

*forma autem intellectus est res intellecta.*

*actu enim (intellectus) fit per aliquam formam, quam oportet esse actionis principium.*

*propter hoc enim intellectus conceptionem in se format ut rem intellectam cognoscat.*

*ipsa specie intelligibilis est intellectus divinus.*

*per modum formae quiescentis et manentis.*

*species formata ab intellectu et in eo per modum emanationis.*

*intelligere subsistens est unum et est Deus.*

No. 6. *Sapientia et ars significantur ut quo Deus intelligit, sed idea ut quod Deus intelligit.*

*Deus autem uno intellectu intelligit multa, et non solum secundum quod in se ipsis sunt, sed etiam secundum quod intellecta sunt, quod est intelligere plures rationes rerum.*

*ut principium cognitionis ipsius (rei) secundum quod forma cognoscibilem dicuntur esse in cognoscente.*

*(plures rationes proprias plurium rerum quae sunt plures ideae).*

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