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A TEXT FROM CAJETAN TOUCHING
ON EXISTENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

IN his autobiographical essay, *Compagnons de route*, Étienne Gilson recounted his new appreciation relatively late in life of Thomas's doctrine of the act of being, *ipsum esse*, and singled out Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan, as one who had also seen that light.¹ However, a few years later Gilson was viewing Cajetan as one who had obscured the properly Thomistic sense of «*ipsum esse*».² As I have elsewhere explained, I have my doubts as to the adequacy of Gilson's own grasp of that notion.³ However, here I mean to take an exploratory step regarding the case of Cajetan.

I wish to call attention to a discussion in his *Commentary on the Summa theologiae of St. Thomas*.⁴ At ST 1.82.3, Thomas himself, arguing for the priority of the intellect over the will as to nobility, says that the object of the intellect is more simple and absolute than the object of the will, because the object of the intellect is the very form⁵ of the appetible good [*ipsa ratio boni appetibilis*], whereas the object of the will is the appetible good, whose form is in the intellect [*appetibile bonum, cuius ratio est in intellectu*]. Thomas then contends that the more simple and abstract something is, the more noble and higher it is; so that the object of the intellect is higher than the object of the will. And since

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¹ *Compagnons de route*, in É. GILSON, *Philosophe de la Chrétienté*, Cerf, Paris 1949, pp. 275-295, at pp. 293-295.

² É. GILSON, *Cajétan et l'existence*, «Tijdschrift voor Philosophie», 15e jaargang (1953), pp. 267-286; concerning which, cfr. my paper: *Capreolus, saint Thomas et l'être*, in (eds.), G. BEDOUELLE ET AL., *Jean Capreolus et son temps 1380-1444. Colloque de Rodez* [special number 1 of «Mémoire dominicaine»], Cerf, Paris 1997, pp. 77-86.

³ *Étienne Gilson and the Actus Essendi* (revised version of 1999 publication), «International Journal of Philosophy» [Taipei] 1 (2002), pp. 65-99.

⁴ The commentary is published in conjunction with the Leonine edition of the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas, i.e. in SANCTI THOMAE AQUINATIS, *Opera Omnia*, Rome 1882 ss.: ex Typographia Polyglotta S. C. de propaganda fide.

⁵ I first tried "idea" to translate "ratio" here, but decided on "form" in an attempt to preserve something of the ambiguity of "ratio", as to whether one refers to what is in the thing or in the mind.

the very nature of the power is according to its order to its object, the unqualified superiority of the intellect over the will follows.⁶

Cajetan introduces and replies to several objections to this line of thinking, but I wish to focus on his discussion of Thomas's presentation of the objects of the intellect and will as "the form of the appetible good" and "the appetible good", respectively. It obliges Cajetan to say several things about our considerations of *existence*, things which are not usually mentioned in Thomistic discussions of knowledge of existence. My aim is neither to defend nor to oppose Cajetan, but to display the discussion as worthy of our attention.

2. THE OBJECTIONS

Cajetan presents two objections against the proposition: «*ratio ipsa boni est obiectum intellectus, bonum autem ipsum est obiectum voluntatis*».⁷ First, it is argued that the distinction between the *ratio boni* and the *bonum* is false and chimerical, as regards the contention that the one pertains to intellect and the other to will. The *ratio* of *bonum* is *bonitas*. Now, *bonitas* is the formal *ratio* of the object of the will – since it is the good, as good, which is the object of appetite. Thus, both *bonitas* and *bonum*, goodness and the good, regard the will. – It is added that the position involves a contradiction, implying that the good is the object of the will, and that goodness is not the object of the will.

The second objection bears on the notion of object. By "object", either you mean the formal object, or you mean merely "that which is objected", i.e. *terminates* the act of that power, or *faces* it. If the statement is about the formal object, it is manifestly false that the *ratio boni*, the notion of the good, is the object of the intellect: for the formal object of the intellect is the *ratio entis* or the *ratio veri*, not the *ratio boni*; the *ratio* of the good is the formal object of the will. – But if by "is the object of the intellect", and "of the will", you mean merely: "*terminates* the act of the intellect", and "of the will", i.e. the acts of understanding and loving, respectively: then, (1) it follows that the indicated difference is null: because in that way not only the *ratio boni* but also the *bonum* is the object of the intellect: it understands both; and both are the object

⁶ In *ST* 1-2.66.3 (ed. Ottawa, 1055b14-18), Thomas makes the same point describing the greater nobility as follows:

«It is evident that the object of reason is more noble than the object of appetite; for reason apprehends something, taken universally [*in universali*], but appetite tends towards things, which have particular being [*esse particulare*]».

⁷ Cajetan, ad loc, para. VIII; i.e.:

«the object of the intellect is the very notion of the appetible good; whereas the object of the will is the appetible good, whose notion is in the intellect».

Prior to these two objections and subsequent to them Cajetan is referring to objections from Scotus, but these two he introduces with "arguo"; thus, he seems to be supplying the problems himself.

of the will, because both are loved. Secondly (2), it follows that the conclusion aimed at is not had: since it is from the diverse nobility of the *formal* objects that the nobility of powers unqualifiedly and intrinsically must be judged, not from the nobility of a subjective part of the object, such as is the *ratio boni* with respect to the object of the intellect (i.e. a particular under the universal “a being” or “the true”).

3. THE FOUNDATION FOR REPLIES

These objections Cajetan answers in paras. XIII-XVIII, a rather lengthy discussion. Before coming to the replies to the individual objections, he presents a general doctrine (XIII-XV).

First of all, in XIII, he presents his doctrinal basis. In every thing there are two items [*in qualibet re sunt duo*], the quiddity [*quidditas*] and the existence [*existentia*]⁸, leaving aside for the present how they are distinct. Between these two, we see this difference, not only by reason but by experience, that quiddity is the aspect [*ratio*] of the thing according to which it is understood [*quidditas est ratio rei quod intelligatur*], while “existing” [*existere*] is the aspect according to which it is sought after [*existere autem quod appetatur*]: indeed, we experience that health is not less *understood* if it not be than if it be;⁹ but no one *seeks* health except *that it be* [*ut sit*] or *in that it is* [*quia est*].

To such an extent is it proper to existence to be sought [*appeti*], and to quiddity to be understood, that existence itself, not just any way, but as exercised

⁸ Cfr. THOMAS, *DV* 21.1 (Leonine ed., lines 179-181):

«In quolibet autem ente est duo considerare, scilicet ipsam rationem speciei et esse ipsum quo aliquid subsistit in specie illa. [Etc.]».

⁹ Cfr. THOMAS, *ST* 1.14.8:

«... forma intelligibilis non nominat principium actionis secundum quod est tantum in intelligente, nisi adiungatur ei inclinatio ad effectum, quae est per voluntatem. Cum enim forma intelligibilis ad opposita se habeat, non produceret determinatum effectum, nisi determinaretur ad unum per appetitum, ut dicitur in *Metaph.* 9 [1048a11]. ... Unde necesse est quod sua [sc. Dei] scientia sit causa rerum, secundum quod habet voluntatem coniunctam. Unde scientia Dei, secundum quod est causa rerum, consuevit nominari scientia approbationis».

We see what is at bottom the same point in *DP* 7.9.ad 6. The article concerns whether the relation of the creature to the creator is a real relation in the creature. The objector argues that it is not, but that it is the very substance of the creature which relates it to the creator; he bases his view on the fact that the being of the creature follows immediately on the divine knowledge. Thomas replies:

«... creatures follow upon God's knowledge as an effect [follows upon a] cause, not as the proper determination of being [*non sicut propriam rationem essendi*] such that it be nothing else for the creature to be than for it to be known by God. But it was in that way that those held who said that all appearances are true, and that the thing follows upon opinion and sense, such that for each to be would be to be sensed or opined by another».

act in reality or in hope, is the *ratio* of the appetible as such; in such fashion that the quiddity [*quod quid erat esse*] of nothing is desired, loved, or gives delight, even if existence itself is the quiddity of that thing, except that it be [*ut sit*] or that it is [*quia est*] in exercised act.

And similarly, the *quod quid erat esse* itself, not taken just any way, but in the very exercised act of *quod quid erat esse* (if, nevertheless, it is appropriate to so speak of such a thing, where there is *no exercise*), i.e. as it has the aspect [*ratio*] of quiddity, i.e. as it has no concern [*ut non curat*] for exercised act of existence, is the *ratio* of the intelligible as such. Thus, if “*existere*” itself is understood, inasmuch as it is understood it takes on the aspect of quiddity, because so taken, the exercise of existence happens to it [*quoniam accidit sibi ut sic exercitium existentiae*]: for it is understood to be “this sort of thing” [*tale quid*]; nor is it understood that it has the act of existence, though it is existence itself which is known.

Next [xiv] we see two derivations from the above doctrine. First, from this difference it arises, that in the first and adequate object of the intellect there are two features, viz. [1] the objective formal content [*ratio obiectiva*], say, the *quod quid erat esse* of “a being” [*entis*], and [2] the objective condition [*conditio obiectiva*], i.e. the *ratio* or mode: *quiddity*. Thus, “*ens*” signifies the object of the intellect on the side of the *ratio obiectiva*, while “*quod quid est*” signifies the same thing [*idem*] on the side of the *conditio obiectiva*.¹⁰

The second result arising from the distinction is the difference meant in our text (1.82.3), saying that the object of the intellect is more abstract than the object of the will. Because anything, according as it has the aspect of *quod quid est*, is more abstract than itself, taken as *having* the act of existence: and in the former way it is the object of the intellect, in the latter of the will.

And using this explanation, Cajetan calls attention to the “*divinum ingenium*” of St. Thomas, that since he is treating of difference of nobility between the

¹⁰ Cajetan uses this term, i.e. “*conditio*”, to characterize the role of *verum* relative to *ens* as object of intellect, in commenting on 1.16.3.ad 3. He says there [in para. v]:

«... Verum autem rei est posterius quidem ente, prius autem cognitione; et est obiectum intellectus non formale, quoniam illud est ens; sed est conditio propria obiecti formalis. Ens enim, licet secundum omnes conditiones et modos et rationes terminet intellectum, dum omnia intelliguntur actu vel potentia, certam tamen exigit conditionem generalem, qua exercet hoc quod est perficere intellectum obiective: et hanc addit verum supra ens. Non enim quomodolibet perficit intellectum, sicut nec quomodolibet perficit appetitum, nec quomodolibet agit. Unde inter verum et bonum, quamvis convenient in hoc quod utrumque est obiectum et terminans, etc., hoc interest, quod bonum obiectum formale voluntatis, verum autem conditionem obiecti formalis significare videtur. Et propterea omnis appetitus est appetitio boni formaliter; omnis autem intellectio non est intellectio veri formaliter, ut in littera dicitur, sed rei verae; ita quod ly rei notat rem intellectam, et ly verae conditionem qua res intelligitur...».

object of the intellect and the object of the will, and in each object there are the two aspects to be considered, viz. the objective *ratio*, and the objective *condition* according to which the objective *ratio* is an object; and (since) the objective *rationes* are one thing (*una res*) not merely really but formally, once one sets aside the relations of reason, as is clear in the case of entity [*entitas*] and goodness – in order to show the difference in nobility, Thomas turns his attention to the objective *conditions* [*conditiones obiectivas*]. And considering the objects of intellect and will precisely the way they are formally and intrinsically objects, he shows that the object of the intellect is more abstract, i.e. that the formal objective *ratio* of the intellect, taken as it is objected to the intellect [*ratio formalis obiectiva intellectus ut obiicitur intellectui*] is more abstract than the formal objective *ratio* of the will, taken as it is objected to the will, even given that the one *ratio* is the same as the other: the situation being such that greater abstraction is posited directly in the *conditio obiectiva*, and hence in the object as it is objected [*in obiecto ut obiectum est*]. But he shows this by the fact that the object of the intellect is the thing [*res*] as *quod quid est*; but is the object of the will, as having being [*ut habens esse*]. But it is clear that *quod quid est* is more abstract than *habens esse*, to such an extent that in God himself, whose *quod quid est* is existence, existence as *quod quid est* is more abstract according to *ratio*, than it itself (existence) taken as “existence in exercised act” [*ut est existere in actu exercito*]. And thus the object of the intellect is unqualifiedly more abstract than the object of the will, speaking formally.¹¹

At this point (xv), Cajetan inserts a note on how what he has said eliminates the *most difficult objection* still standing in this matter, namely the following. *Esse* is more abstract than quiddity, because it is contracted by quiddity: a sign of this is the fact that *esse*, as abstractive, is posited as the most proper name of God.¹² Therefore, the formal *ratio* of the object of the will is more abstract than the formal *ratio* of the object of the intellect. – The answer to this is that it is now clear that «*esse*» can be taken in two ways,¹³ i.e. in exercised

¹¹ He says (In *ST* 1.82.3: *XIV*):

«... Constat enim quod quod quod est abstractius est habente esse: ita quod in ipso Deo, cuius quod quid est est existentia, abstractior secundum rationem est existentia ut quod quid est, quam ipsamet ut est existere in actu exercito. [italics in edition]»

¹² What is one to think of this objection, quite apart from Cajetan’s treatment of it? Is *esse* “contracted” by quiddity, or only by finite quiddity, the quiddity of a caused thing? And does Thomas say that “*esse*” is the most proper name, or does he say that it is “*qui est*”? I.e. in *ST* 1.13.11, “*qui est*” is said to be the most proper name because it signifies “*esse*”, which is the divine form or essence. – Cajetan’s line of thinking would seem to make “*esse*” most proper, just as long as it was not taken most properly, i.e. as signifying being as exercised.

¹³ Cajetan says [*xv*]:

«... Iam enim patet quod esse dupliciter sumi potest: scilicet in actu exercito ipsius existentiae; et per modum quidditatis. Et quod ut exercet existentiam, addit supra seipsum ut

act of very existence, and after the manner of a quiddity. And as it exercises existence, it adds to itself as *quod quid est*. And, consequently, as an object of the intellect, it is more abstract – because it is object of the will according as it stands in exercised act of existence; but it is an object of the intellect, according as it has the aspect of a sort of quiddity in itself [*secundum quod habet rationem quidditatis cuiusdam in seipso*].¹⁴

4. REPLIES TO THE OBJECTIONS

Cajetan next [xvi] replies to the objections. It is by now clear that by the word “object” here is meant the object as objected [*obiectum ut obiectum*], i.e. the *ratio* of the object with its objective *condition*; and by “*ratio boni*” is meant the *quod quid est*, not merely of the good as such, viz. goodness [*bonitas*], but the *quod quid est* of the good no matter how taken [*et quid nomine rationis boni: scilicet quod quid est non solum boni ut sic, puta bonitas; sed boni qualitercumque sumpti*]. And it is clear what is meant by the word “good”, namely the very good as such, which is to say nothing else but the thing which is fitting as regards actually being [*res in ordine ad esse conveniens*].

Accordingly, when it is said in the first objection that not merely the good but also the *ratio* of the good regards the will,¹⁵ because goodness is the *ratio* of the good – the reply is that “*ratio boni*” can be taken in two ways, in one way as a *ratio* [*ut ratio*], and in the other way as an existent [*ut existens*]; and in the second way it regards the will, in the first way the intellect. And because St. Thomas was speaking about it as it has the aspect of *quod quid est* [*ut habet rationem quod quid est*], therefore he called it by the more suitable name [*appropriato vocabulo*] “*ratio boni*”.

Again, when in the second objection it is said: «Either by the term ‘object’ you mean the formal object, etc.» – the answer is that by the word “object” we understand properly and explicitly neither (neither the formal object, nor the terminus of the operation), but the object as objected [*obiectum ut obiectum est*], which is constituted by the objective *condition* of the formal *ratio* of the

quod quid est. Et consequenter ut obiectum intellectus, est abstractius; quia est obiectum voluntatis secundum quod stat in actu exercito existentiae; intellectus autem, secundum quod rationem habet quidditatis cuiusdam in seipso. [*italics in edition*]

¹⁴ Cajetan makes a careful distinction between form and *esse*: cfr. 1.7.1.x. Cfr. also 1.3.4.V – on the proper question “*an est*” and the proper mode of knowledge of *esse* – which is not quidditative except in God; cfr. 1.4.2.viii. – It occurs to me that the “*in actu exercito*” consideration makes the item more like the subsisting thing, the “*habens esse*”; thus, one is not taking *esse* in its most abstract simplicity when one takes it “*in actu exercito*”. – The question discussed here by Cajetan is reducible to the question: why is “being” a more proper name of God than is “good”?

¹⁵ Here, the text says “intellect”, but it appears to be an error.

object. And so, when it is argued that it is false that the *ratio boni* is the object of the intellect, it is replied that the *ratio boni*, as a *ratio* [*ut ratio est*], is the objective *conditio*, and by this [*per hoc*] it constitutes the object of the intellect in the role of object [*in esse obiecti*], as is clear from what has been said. Nor does this belong more, befit more, the *ratio boni* than the *ratio veri*, or the *ratio* of anything else, because it belongs to the *ratio* inasmuch as it is a *ratio*; but the *ratio boni* is introduced in preference to any other, because the comparison will be made to it (i.e. to the *bonum*). And this is directly and explicitly the intention of the text of St. Thomas; as though he had said that the good [*bonum*] is offered to the intellect in a more abstract mode, because in the mode of *ratio* and *quod quid est*, than to the will, to which it is offered in the mode of something being good [*ipsius entis boni*]; and thus the object of the intellect as such is more abstract than the object of the will as such.¹⁶

Cajetan, in xviii, adds a brief note, warning the reader lest one get the idea that it is one thing that is apprehended, and another that is sought [*appetitur*] – since it is impossible that one seek [*appeti*] the unknown; so that it must be the same item [*idem*] and in the same respect [*secundum idem*] that is sought and known. Nevertheless both the objective *ratio* and *conditio* of the known as such is other [*alia*] than the *ratio* and the *conditio* of the sought, as such; and as regards these, the object of the intellect is more abstract than the object of the will.

5. CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Rather than simply to leave you with the vision of Cajetan, I might call attention, by way of conclusion, to some texts of Thomas which appear to me to encourage this line of interpretation, and some which put it in question.

¹⁶ In xvii Cajetan adds to this reply. Because by the word “object” is implicitly sub-understood the formal objective *ratio* so conditioned, accordingly one can save the letter of the text also concerning that implicitly touched-upon *ratio* (though it is not imperative that one do so), and that in two ways.

First, because *ens* and *bonum* are interchanged and so are the same thing [*idem*], and there is no *entis ratio* which is not a *boni ratio*; since the *entis ratio* is a *ratio obiectiva*, it could truly also be said that the *boni ratio* is the formal object of the intellect: for *boni ratio* is not only *bonitas*, but also *entitas* and any other *ratio*. – Secondly, it is said, and it comes back to the same conclusion, that *boni ratio* insinuates every *quod quid est* as such; for St. Thomas did what teachers are accustomed to do, to use one to insinuate the rest. But he did well to keep in mind the *ratio boni*; because with regard to the object of the will, which is the good, he wished to show the greater abstraction of the object of the intellect. Thus, it is as though he had said: that the object of the intellect is more abstract than the object of the will, is shown by the fact that even in the very object of the will, that which is object of the intellect as such is more abstract than that which is objected to the will; because the good itself is objected to the will, but its ratio is objected to the intellect.

The most obvious substantial background is DV 21.1. This, as it seems to me somewhat neglected, text asks whether «the good [*bonum*]» adds something over and above «a being [*ens*]». ¹⁷ It is in explaining what both *verum* and *bonum* add to *ens* that it distinguishes, within the thing considered and spoken of, between the *ratio speciei* and *ipsum esse quo subsistit in speciei illa*. It teaches that a being [*aliquod ens*] can be perfective of another in two ways, in function of this duality in the being. The *ens* can perfect an intellect in function of the *ratio speciei*, and thus the intellect perceives the *ratio entis*; it is this mode of perfecting that “*verum*” adds to “*ens*” (the *ens* is not in the intellect in function of *esse naturale*). *Verum* is in the mind; and each being is called “*verum*” as conformed or conformable to intellect. ¹⁸ “*Bonum*” is said of the same thing as perfective of another in function of its *esse quod habet in rerum natura* (so taken, the perfective thing is an “end”, a *finis*). ¹⁹

In this text, the interest is primarily in *bonum*, and thus little is said of the intellect’s mode of consideration. However, in the earlier DV 3.3.ad 8, we have a relevant approach. The discussion asks whether the divine ideas pertain to speculative knowledge or only to practical knowledge. Thomas is going to say that they pertain to both. ²⁰ The objection argues:

«Speculative knowledge in God is said to be nothing else but *simple* knowing [*simplex notitia*]. But *simple* knowledge can have nothing other than knowledge. Therefore, since “idea” adds a relation to *things*, it seems that it does not refer to speculative knowledge».

Thomas replies:

¹⁷ It thus significantly parallels DV 1.1, an often cited text. However, its approach is somewhat different (and different again is what we will have in ST 1.5.1).

¹⁸ In so presenting the *verum* of things themselves, Thomas, with the word “*conformabile*”, retains the outlook of DV 1.1, where the relation of natural things to our intellect still has a rather prominent role; this is criticized in ST 1.16.1. – On this, cf. my paper, *St. Thomas’s Successive Discussions of the Nature of Truth*, in D. OLS, O.P. (ed.), *Sanctus Thomas de Aquino: Doctor Hodiernae Humanitatis* (Miscellanea offerta al Prof. Abelardo Lobato, O.P.): Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City 1995, pp. 153-168; also *Is Truth a Transcendental for St. Thomas Aquinas?*, «*Nova et Vetera*» [English edition], 2 (2004), pp. 1-20.

¹⁹ This calls to mind an episode in my Paris student days (1953-54). Each week I was privileged to assist at the gathering in the home of Gabriel Marcel. At one point we were discussing a book someone had sent to him, a book taking a “phenomenalist” line concerning an afterlife: in the afterlife, it contended, one would be presented with the appearance of whatever one had desired in life, for better or for worse. One of our group, the son of the philosopher Henri Gouhier, exclaimed: if in this present life I desire Catherine Dunham [an American *danseuse* famous in Paris], in the afterlife I do not want the appearance of Catherine Dunham; I want Catherine Dunham! We called this an “existentialist” contention.

²⁰ In the article, however, he will end by saying that the term “idea”, involving as it does the notion of “form”, which is causal, and not just “likeness” or “notion”, really pertains to God’s practical knowledge, whether actually or virtually practical.

«... knowledge is called “simple” not in order to exclude the relation of the knowledge to the known, which is inseparably tied to all knowledge, but in order to exclude the admixture of that which falls outside the domain of knowledge [*extra genus notitiae*]; such as is the existence of things [*sicut est existentia rerum*], which the knowledge of vision [*scientia visionis*] adds; or [as is] the order of the will towards the producing of the things known, which the knowledge of approbation [*scientia approbationis*] adds; just as fire is called a “simple” body, not in order to exclude its essential parts, but the admixture of anything extraneous».

Thus, the *existence* of things is taken as something not properly pertaining to the pure knowability of things.²¹

On the other hand, some of the approaches used in the *ST 1* might lead one to wonder whether Cajetan’s treatment of the issue is still one Thomas would greet enthusiastically. Consider the presentations of the relations of *ens*, *verum*, and *bonum*. In q. 5 it is shown that *bonum* is identical with what is called “*ens*” (a. 1), and that *ens* is prior in the order of notions to *bonum* (a. 2). In a. 2, it is seen that something is knowable inasmuch as it is in act, making *ens* the primary knowable object. However, in a. 1, it was seen that something is a being in act by virtue of *esse* itself. Thus, *esse* turns out to be the principle of knowability. If we go on to q. 16, on the true, we see that *verum* is second to *ens* in the order of notions, and prior to *bonum*. This is explained by saying that *verum* relates to *esse* unqualifiedly and immediately. *Bonum*, on the other hand, follows upon *esse* inasmuch as *esse* is in some way a perfection.²² This again suggests that the primary intelligible is *esse*.

What this means, at least, is that it is no longer very convenient to speak of *bonum* by means of *esse*, in contrast to *ens* and *verum*. Yet what do we find in the same q. 5? 1.5.3 asks whether every being is a good, and answers in the affirmative. To an objector who claims that, adding to “*ens*”, “*bonum*” must contract “*ens*”, just as the categories do, Thomas replies:

«It is to be said that substance, quantity and quality... contract “*ens*” by applying “*ens*” to some particular [*aliquam*] quiddity or nature. “*Bonum*” does not in such fashion add something to “*ens*”, but [adds] the mere aspect [*rationem tantum*] of the desirable and of perfection, which belongs to being itself [*quod convenit ipsi esse*] in whatever nature it be. Hence, “*bonum*” does not contract “*ens*”». ²³

²¹ *DV 3.3.ad 8*; *DV 3.3. ad 9*, discussing the good and the true, also relates to what Cajetan is saying above. – Concerning “*scientia approbationis*”, cf. above where we cite *ST 1.14.8*.

²² The text here has «perfectum», i.e. «esse, secundum quod est aliquo modo perfectum», but it looks like it should read «perfectionem». – Cajetan reads it as saying that *ens* must take on the aspect of perfection, in order that it be taken as *bonum*.

²³ *ST 1.5.3.ad 1*. We notice, still, that *esse* is here seen as perfecting some nature or other: «... in whatever nature it be».

A text of Thomas which encourages us to consider the importance of the abstract or universal (and thus seemingly, in Cajetan's sense, "quidditative") grasp of *esse* is *ST* 1.12.4.ad 3. The issue is whether any created intellect through its own natural powers can see the divine essence. The objector holds that to say it was beyond our natural powers would imply that it is impossible that the created intellect be elevated to such a vision at all. In arguing this, he notes that the senses cannot be elevated to knowledge of immaterial substance. Thomas replies by distinguishing the case of the senses from that of intellect. The sense of sight is altogether material, and thus cannot be elevated to a vision of the immaterial. But the human and angelic intellects, because by nature already somewhat elevated above matter, can be further elevated by grace. In arguing this, Thomas introduces a sign of the situation. Whereas corporeal vision cannot know abstractly what it knows concretely, our intellect can consider in abstraction what it knows concretely. We read:

«Though it knows things having form in matter, nevertheless it resolves the composite into the two, and considers the form just in itself. And similarly, the angelic intellect, though it is connatural for it to know *esse* immersed [*concretum*] in some nature, nevertheless it can intellectually isolate for consideration [*secernere per intellectum*] being itself [*ipsum esse*], when it knows that it itself is one item, and its *esse* is another [*dum cognoscit quod aliud est ipse, et aliud est suum esse*].»

And Thomas concludes:

«And therefore, since the created intellect through its nature has the aptitude to apprehend immersed form and immersed being [*formam concretam et esse concretum*] in abstraction, by way of a sort of analysis [*in abstractione per modum resolutionis cuiusdam*], it can be elevated by grace so as to know separate subsisting substance and separate subsisting *esse*». ²⁴

Obviously, Thomas is using the *esse* / nature composition to have a way of presenting angelic mind as distinct from the human, but what he says about the angel applies to the human as well. My point is that there are not only two modes of knowing *esse*, but that the more noble mode of consideration, the one which indicates the elevability of the intellect to the vision of the divine essence (which is subsistent *esse* itself), is the abstract consideration. ²⁵

²⁴ *ST* 1.12.4.ad 3.

²⁵ The following passage from Thomas, echoing Aristotle, seems to me best to express the importance of the two metaphysical dimensions of the being which confronts us, the universal and the individual:

«And he [Aristotle] says that if the universal is said of many in function of one intelligibility [*rationem*] and not equivocally, the universal as regards what pertains to reason [*quantum ad id quod rationis est*], that is, as regards science and demonstration, will not be less of a being [*minus ens*] than the particulars, but rather more, because the incorruptible is more

Of course, *esse* is always the *actus essendi*. The Cajetanian objective condition does not take that away from it. It seems to pertain more to what Thomas calls the mode of knowing or considering, i.e. the mode which the form of the known has in the knower.²⁶ The intellect first knows *esse*, as it does any other formal feature of a thing, universally. Thus, Thomas takes as his example of a *per accidens* sensible object, i.e. what jumps to the attention of *intellect* on the occasion of sense cognition, the life (considered universally) of a living thing.²⁷ (Life is the being, i.e. the *esse*, of the living thing.²⁸ This is obviously an instance of *esse*, considered universally.)²⁹ Then, as with any such formal fea-

of a being [*magis ens*] than the corruptible, and the universal intelligibility [*ratio universalis*] is incorruptible whereas the particulars are corruptible, corruptibility happening to them in function of the individual principles, not in function of the intelligibility [*rationem*] of the species, which is common to all and preserved by generation; thus, therefore, as regards what pertains to reason, the universals are more [*magis sunt*] than the particulars, but as regards natural subsistence [*quantum uero ad naturalem subsistentiam*], the particulars are to a greater extent [*magis sunt*], [and thus] are called primary and principle substances». [*Expositio libri Posteriorum* [Thomas's *Commentary on Aristotle's Posterior Analytics*] 1.37 (ed. Leonine, lines 173-187, commenting on Aristotle, 85b15; Spiazzi p. 330)].

²⁶ Cfr. *ST* 1.84.1 (512a29-b9).

²⁷ THOMAS, *Sententia libri De anima* (in *Opera omnia*, t. 45/1, Rome-Paris 1984: Commissio Leonina/Vrin), 2.13 (lines 182-190). Cfr. ARISTOTLE, *De anima* 2.6 (418a7-26). Thomas says that when I see someone speaking and setting himself in motion, I apprehend that person's life (considered universally), and I can say that I "see" that he is alive (thus speaking of the intelligible object as a "visible".)

²⁸ *ST* 1.18.2 (127a32-37), following up on the *Sed contra* reference to Aristotle, *De anima* 2.4 (415a13). There, Aristotle is arguing that the soul is the cause of the living body, as its form. The passage in the Latin which Thomas, in his *Sententia libri De anima*, comments upon is: «... Quod quidem igitur sit sicut substantia, manifestum est. Causa enim ipsius esse omnibus substantia est, uiuere autem uiuentibus est esse, causa autem et principium horum anima».

In the Leonine ed., t. 45/1, Rome-Paris, 1984: Commissio Leonina\Vrin, this is at 2.7 (p. 93). Thomas paraphrases, 2.7 (lines 176-181):

«... that is the cause of something in the role of substance, i.e. in the role of form, which is the cause of being [*causa essendi*], for through the form each thing is in act [*est actu*]; but the soul is the cause of being for living things, for through the soul they live; and living itself [*ipsum uiuere*] is their being [*esse*]; therefore, the soul is the cause of living things in the role of form».

I note that W. S. Hett, in the Loeb Classics translation of the *De anima* [Cambridge, Mass./London, 1964 (1st ed., 1936; revised 1957): Harvard\Heinemann, p. 87], translates Aristotle's "*einai*" here as "existence":

«... substance is the cause of existence in all things, and for living creatures existence is life, and of these [Hett notes: existence and life] the soul is the cause and first principle».

²⁹ The senses, of course, know *esse* but merely concretely, as here and now: *ST* 1.75.6 (445b31-32):

«... Sensus autem non cognoscit esse nisi sub hic et nunc, sed intellectus apprehendit esse absolute, et secundum omne tempus».

ture, one must consider it as to its mode of being in singular things existing outside the mind.³⁰ This one does by turning towards the phantasms in the imagination.³¹

Should one make the sort of use of “quiddity” that Cajetan does? Thomas himself, in the *ST* 1, constantly presents intelligibility in function of being in act.³²

If I were to line up the series of objects, I would begin with *esse*, taken absolutely. It is not being considered as exercised, but as what is most formal in the thing.³³ And the objective condition is quidditative. Leaving out (for brevity and simplicity) the step whereby truth comes into the picture, I would next put *esse* as exercised (as formal content, or formal *ratio*), but with the objective condition of quiddity: this is (or pertains to) the *intellect's* consideration of the good. Thirdly, I would put *esse* as exercised, and with the objective condition of exercise: that is the object of the will as affecting the will.³⁴

ABSTRACT: This paper is an exploratory step in the consideration of Cajetan on the act of being, *ipsum esse*. I focus on his commentary on *Summa theologiae* 1.82.3. St. Thomas there presents the intellect as more noble than the will, in that the object of the will is the appetible good itself [*appetibile bonum*] whereas that of the intellect is the nature or form of the appetible good [*ipsa ratio boni appetibilis*]. Defending this position obliges Cajetan to distinguish between existence as understood, which is existence taken quidditatively, and existence as object of appetite, which is existence as exercised. He also argues that it must be existence as quidditatively considered which is the proper name of God, not existence as exercised.

³⁰ Cf. *ST* 1.87.3.ad 1: the first object of our intellect, taken according to our present state, is not just any *ens et verum*; it is *ens et verum* considered in material things.

³¹ Cf. *ST* 1.84.7 and 1.86.1.

³² Cf. *ST* 1.5.2; 1.14.3 (note: «... *actualitas ... in existendo*»); 1.87.1.

³³ Cf. *ST* 1.4.1.ad 3 and 1.7.1.

³⁴ It is not easy to see just what one is talking about as regards these various objects. The intellect must present the will with the will's object. However, the intellect does so as an intellect. It is not for the intellect to live the life proper to the will as such. Thus, the intellect must present the good to the will, but it must present the good in the mode of an understood object. It belongs properly to the will to be inclined to what the intellect so apprehends.

Moreover, in presenting the will with its object, the intellect is cognitive of the act of the will itself. This is because the act of the will is included in the very conception of the object of the will: the intelligibility “the good” is “that towards which appetite tends”. The idea of “wanting a being” is included in the idea of “a wanted being”. But again, the intellect knows the act of the will in its, the intellect's, own mode. The tendency as tendency is entirely the contribution of the will.

I keep coming back to the text of 1.16.4.ad 2:

«... The intellect by priority apprehends a being [*ens*]; and secondly it apprehends itself being intellectual towards a being [*se intelligere ens*]; and thirdly it apprehends itself being appetitive with respect to a being [*se appetere ens*]. Hence, firstly there is the *ratio entis*, secondly the *ratio veri*, and thirdly the *ratio boni*...».