

The Science of *Metaphysics*

DM I

Two Easy Thoughts

- Metaphysics studies being, in an unrestricted way:
 - So, Metaphysics studies *ens*, altogether, understood either as:
 - *Ens* comprising all beings, including *per se*, *per accidens*, and *entia rationis*.
 - Or, if the last is a bridge too far, then comprising all real beings, whether *per se* or *per accidens*.

The First Opinion

- The first opinion, then, is that being, taken in the most abstract way, insofar as it embraces under itself not only all real beings, both *per se* and *per accidens*, but even beings of reason, is the appropriate object of this science. (*DM* I 1.2)
- *Prima igitur sententia est ens abstractissime sumptum, quatenus sub se complectitur non solum universa entia realia, tam per se quam per accidens, sed etiam rationis entia, esse obiectum adaequatum huius scientiae.*

Three Kinds of Beings (Kind of. . .)

- Some simple first approximations:

- *A via negativa:*

- x is an *ens per se* =_{df} (i) x exists formally and not merely objectively; (ii) and x does not exist ‘in another’ (*in alio*)
 - x is an *ens per accidens* =_{df} (i) x exists formally and not merely objectively; (ii) and x does exist ‘in another’ (*in alio*)

- Not terribly helpful . . . Better:

- x is an *ens per se* =_{df} (i) x exists formally and not merely objectively; (ii) necessarily, an account (*ratio*) of x makes reference to x ’s being ϕ , where ϕ is a substance sortal; and (iii) there is no ψ , where ψ is not a substance sortal, such that an account of x necessarily makes reference to ψ .
 - x is an *ens per accidens* =_{df} (i) x exists formally and not merely objectively; (ii) necessarily, an account (*ratio*) of x makes reference to ψ , where ψ is not a substance sortal, and (iii) and necessarily, an account of being- ψ makes reference to being ϕ , where ϕ is a substance sortal.

Some Terminology

- ϕ is a *sortal iff* (i) ϕ is a predicate; (ii) ϕ provides so-called counting criteria for a class
 - Consequently, typically, but not always, the notion of a sortal is wed to the notion of a *count noun*.
 - Count allow us to answer ‘How many?’, mass nouns require us to ask ‘How much?’
 - ‘A sortal universal supplies a principle for distinguishing and counting individual particulars which it collects.’ — Strawson (1959)
- ϕ is a *substance sortal iff* (i) ϕ is a sortal; and (ii) ϕ specifies the essence of its bearer; or (ii) ϕ provides grounds for determining existence and persistence conditions for things falling under it.
 - N.b. To some ears ‘substance sortal’ sounds pleonastic. So Wiggins: ‘By an ultimate sortal I mean a sortal which either itself restricts no other sortal or else has a sense which both yields necessary and sufficient conditions of persistence for the kind it defines and is such that this sense can be clearly fixed and fully explained without reference to any other sortal which restricts it.’ (1967: 32)

Three Kinds of Beings (Kind of. . .)

- x is an *ens rationis* =_{df} x has ‘being only objectively in the intellect’
 - or equivalently, ‘that which is thought by reason as being, even though it has no entity in itself.’ (*DM* LIV 1.6)
 - An *ens rationis* ‘does not have in itself any other real or positive being besides being an object of intellect.’ (*DM* LIV 1.6)
 - Such a being is in reason ‘objectively and does not have another more noble or more real way of being’ (*DM* LIV 1.6)
- *Aliquid vero interdum obicitur seu consideratur a ratione, quod non habet in se aliud reale ac positivum esse praeterquam obiecti intellectui seu rationi de illo cogitanti, et hoc propriissime vocatur ens rationis, quia est aliquo modo in ratione, scilicet, obiective, et non habet alium nobiliorem aut magis realem essendi modum, unde possit ens appellari. Et ideo recte definiri solet ens rationis esse illud, quod habet esse obiective tantum in intellectu, seu esse id, quod a ratione cogitatur ut ens, cum tamen in se entitatem non habeat.* (*DM* LIV 1.6)
- A simple first approximation: x exists objectively =_{df} x ’s existence *constitutively* depends upon x ’s being cognized by an intellect.

So, A First Easy Thought

- So, Metaphysics studies *ens*, altogether, understood either as comprising all beings, including beings *per se*, *per accidens*, and *entia rationis*.

Absolute Generality

- This opinion is urged, first, because being, so taken, can be the appropriate object of some science; therefore, most especially the object of this science, which is the most abstract of all the sciences. The premiss is evident, both because being is presented to the intellect in that whole breadth, and can therefore also be the object of a single science, for it is a single *ratio*; and also because, just as the intellect understands all those things, so does this science treat of all those things, namely, beings of reason and real beings, both per se and per accidens; therefore, if for that reason they are contained under the object of the intellect, for a similar reason they should be contained under the appropriate object of this science; therefore, being, insofar as it is the object of this science, should be taken under that abstraction and breadth according to which it directly comprehends all these things; and in the same way should one take the common attributes that are dealt with by this science, such as are unity, multitude, truth, and the like. (*DM* 1 1.2)

One Approach

1. *Entia per se, per accidens, and rationis* exhaust all the *entia* there are.
2. If the *entia* exhausting all the *entia* there are share a common *ratio* (*scil.* existing), then since this is the most abstract *ratio* of all, they will prove the (only) appropriate objects of the most abstract science.
3. Metaphysics is the most abstract science.
4. Hence, *entia per se, per accidens, and rationis* are the (only) appropriate objects of metaphysics.
 - ♦ Further, it will fall to this science to consider them as beings, together with the common attributes with which metaphysics deals such as unity, multitude, truth, and so forth.

No Good

- No *entia per accidens*:
 - Since, then, this being *per accidens* is not one thing, but an aggregation of many, it cannot have a proper definition, nor can the real passions that are demonstrated to belong to it; and therefore it does not fall under a science.
 - But if such a being were considered insofar as it is in some way one, and its unity in some way real, in that case such a being would not be considered insofar as it is altogether *per accidens*, but insofar as it is in some way comprehended under the scope of being *per se*, although perhaps in that scope it holds some imperfect rank; for there are various modes of being *per se* and *per accidens*, as we shall make clear in its proper place, while treating of unity. It is for this reason that I said that the discussion concerns being *per accidens* as such; for a being *per accidens*, as such, is not a being, but beings. . . (*DM* I 1.5)

Still No Good

- Suppose we think of them as unified by the intellect, so that they are one and not many:
 - If, however, that unity does not exist in reality, but only in apprehension or conception, such a being, as such, will not truly be called real: whence the same argument will apply to it as applies to other beings of reason. But these are excluded from the direct consideration of this science by the same Aristotle, *Metaph.* VI, near the end, as all interpreters have noted in [their commentaries on] the same place. And the reason is that such beings are not truly beings, but rather beings in name only, nor do they agree with real beings in the same concept of being, but only through a kind of imperfect analogy of proportionality, as we shall see below.

What is this talk of analogy?

- ‘... there are two ways in which something common can be divided into those that are under it, just as there are two ways in which something is common. For there is the division of something univocal into its species by *differentiae* in terms of which the nature of the genus is equally participated in the species, for example as animal is divided into man and horse, and the like. Another division is that of something common by analogy, which is predicated in one of the divisions according to a complete account (*ratio*) and in the other imperfectly and in a certain way, as for example being is divided into substance and accident, and into being in actuality and being in potentiality: and this sort of division is as it were midway between equivocity and univocity.’
- ‘... *est duplex modus dividendi commune in ea quae sub ipso sunt, sicut est duplex communitatis modus. Est enim quaedam divisio univoci in species per differentias quibus aequaliter natura generis in speciebus participatur, sicut animal dividitur in hominem et equum, et huiusmodi; alia vero divisio est ejus quod est commune per analogiam, quod quidem secundum perfectam rationem praedicatur de uno dividendium, et de altero imperfecte et secundum quid, sicut ens dividitur in substantiam et accidens, et in ens actu et in ens potentia: et haec divisio est quasi media inter aequivocum et univocum.*’ Cajetanus, *In Secundum Sententiarum* 42.1.3

Thinking Thomistically

- Univocity

- a and b are univocally ϕ *iff*: (i) a is ϕ ; (ii) b is ϕ ; and (iii) the accounts of ϕ -ness in 'a is ϕ ' and 'b is ϕ ' are the same.
 - These accounts must be bon-disjunctive:
 - Water =df (i) H₂O; or (ii) x, y, and z; or (iii) . . .
 - Real, rather than nominal:
 - So, e.g.: Water is the clear, potable liquid of which lakes and rivers are composed and which falls as rain and issues from springs.

- Equivocity

- a and b are equivocally ϕ *iff*: (i) a is ϕ ; (ii) b is ϕ ; and (iii) the accounts of ϕ -ness in 'a is ϕ ' and 'b is ϕ ' have nothing in common and do not overlap in any way.

Two Flavours of Thomistic Analogy

- a and b are analogically ϕ *iff*: (i) a is ϕ ; (ii) b is ϕ ; (iii) a and b are non-metaphorically ϕ ; and (iv) a and b are neither univocally nor equivocally ϕ .
 - Source Dependent Analogy
 - (SDA) a and b are analogically ϕ in a source dependent way *iff*: (i) a is ϕ ; (ii) b is ϕ ; and (iii) there is some c such that the accounts of ϕ -ness in 'a is ϕ ' and 'b is ϕ ' necessarily make reference to the account of ϕ -ness in 'c is ϕ ' in an asymmetrical way.
- Ordered Analogy
 - (OA) a and b are analogically ϕ in an ordered way *iff*: (i) a is ϕ ; (ii) b is ϕ ; and (iii) the account of ϕ in 'b is ϕ ' necessarily makes reference to the account of ϕ in 'a is ϕ ' in an asymmetrical way.

An Orthogonal (?) Distinction within the Works of Suárez

- a and b are *proportionally* analogically ϕ iff: (i) a and b are analogically ϕ ; (ii) there is some R such that Rac and some d such that Rbd ; (iii) a and c and b and d are in different domains.
 - As a first pass, this seems an extrinsic matter.
 - It also seems to threaten second-order univocity.
 - So, e.g., ‘is a source’ (*principium*) said of a spring and the first number in a series
- a and b are *attributively* analogically ϕ iff: (i) a and b are analogically ϕ ; (ii) a and b are either meet either (SDA) or (OA)
 - At first pass, this seems an intrinsic matter.
 - So, e.g., ‘is healthy’ said of Duns Scotus and his cheeks; or ‘is intelligent’ said of Professor Cross and God

So, analogy?

- So, we are looking not for *sameness* of accounts (= univocity), and not for asymmetric dependence of accounts (= source-dependent homonymy), and not for complete difference of accounts (= homonymy by chance), but rather:
 - a four-term relation of the following form:
 - $a : b :: c : d$
 - So, e.g.:
 - sight : body :: reason : soul
 - spine : fish :: bone : (land) animal (*APo.* 97b-98a)

Analogy Explicated in the *Topics* (108a)

- Likeness should be studied, first, in the case of things belonging to different genera;
- the formulae being $A : B :: C : D$
 - as knowledge stands to the object of knowledge, so is sensation related to the object of sensation,
- and 'as A is *in* B , so is C *in* D '
 - as sight is in the eye, so is reason in the soul,
 - and as is a calm in the sea, so is windlessness in the air.

Two types?

- Hesse reads two distinct types of analogy into these remarks:
 - (i) 'When there are properties in common between parts of the members of different species, for example spine and bone share an "osseous nature'
 - (ii) 'When there is similarity in the relation of the parts to the whole in each species, for example cup is the symbol of Dionysus as shield is of Ares, and, more typically, hand and claw, scale and feather, wings and fins, and so on, have similar structural positions or functions in relation to their respective organisms.' (1965, 330)

Trivialization

- Analogy in any sense other than mathematical proportionality ‘is merely the fact that some relations have more than one example.’ — Robinson (1952, 466)
- So, ‘ $A : B :: C : D$ ’ simply asserts the existence of a relation R such that aRb and cRd .
- If this trivialization holds, then so too does the claim that univocity re-enters in second-order way.

Back to those Beings

- So, back to *entia per accidens* and *entia rationis*:
 - If, however, that unity does not exist in reality, but only in apprehension or conception, such a being, as such, will not truly be called real: whence the same argument will apply to it as applies to other beings of reason. But these are excluded from the direct consideration of this science by the same Aristotle, *Metaph.* VI, near the end, as all interpreters have noted in [their commentaries on] the same place. And the reason is that such beings are not truly beings, but rather beings in name only [or, are not true beings, but merely bear the name alone; *quia talia neque vere sunt entia sed fere nomine tantum*], nor do they agree with real beings in the same concept of being, but only through a kind of imperfect analogy of proportionality, as we shall see below.

The Appropriate Object

- It must be said, therefore, that being insofar as it is real being is the appropriate object of this science.
(*DM* I 1.26)
- *Dicendum est ergo ens in quantum ens reale esse obiectum adaequatum huius scientiae.*

Why?

- And this claim is proved on the basis of what has been said thus far against the other opinions. For it has been shown that the appropriate object of this science should include God and the other immaterial substances, but not only these. Likewise, that it ought to include not only substances, but also real accidents, though not beings of reason or beings that are altogether *per accidens*; but there can be no object of this sort other than being as such; therefore, that is the appropriate object. (*DM* I 1.26)
- *Probataque est haec assertio ex dictis hactenus contra reliquas sententias. Ostensum est enim obiectum adaequatum huius scientiae debere comprehendere Deum et alias substantias immateriales, non tamen solas illas. Item debere comprehendere non tantum substantias, sed etiam accidentia realia, non tamen entia rationis et omnino per accidens; sed huiusmodi obiectum nullum aliud esse potest praeter ens ut sic; ergo illud est obiectum adaequatum.*

But, wait. . .

- But, in order to further clarify this claim, an objection that immediately presents itself must be addressed, for, in order to establish some object of a science, it is necessary that it have properties which can be demonstrated of it, and also principles and causes through which they can be demonstrated; but being insofar as it is being cannot have such properties, principles, and causes; therefore. . . (*DM* I 1, 27)
- *Sed, ut haec assertio amplius declaretur, occurrendum est obiectioni quae statim sese offert, nam ad constituendum aliquod obiectum scientiae, necesse est ut habeat proprietates quae de illo demonstrari possint et principia ac causas per quas possint demonstrari; sed ens, in quantum ens, non potest habere huiusmodi proprietates, principia et causas; ergo . . .*

The Conception of Science Assumed

- Broadly conceived, *scientia* is an organized and articulated body of knowledge
- So, this extends to any such body, in any area, provided that it meets three criteria:
 - Any given *scientia* must deal with a single domain, unified by a shared essence
 - Any given *scientia* must put on display the priority relations between essences and other features of entities in the domain
 - Any given *scientia* must proceed via *demonstrations*, that is, deductions, or logically valid syllogisms that:
 - the premises are necessary;
 - the premises are better known than their conclusions;
 - and the premises are universal in scope (*APo* 71b16-25, 77b5-73a6; *Met.* 981a5-30, 1006a6-18, 1039b27-1040a7)

Possible for *ens* in so far as it is real *ens*?

1. Necessarily, if there is a science of being in so far as it is being, then: (i) there are properties attaining to being just in so far as it is being; and (ii) there are principles and causes from which these properties can be derived.
2. Being just in so far as it is being lacks such properties and principles.
3. Hence, there is no science of being just in so far as it is being.

Why (2)?

- And the minor is clear with respect to its first part, since being insofar as it is being, abstracted in this way, is included *per se* and essentially in every being and in every mode or property of any given being; therefore, it cannot have a property that is in this way appropriate and proper, since a subject cannot be of the essence of its property. (*DM* I 1, 27)
- *Minor autem quoad priorem partem patet, quia ens in quantum ens ita abstractum includitur per se et essentialiter in omni ente et in omni modo vel proprietate cuiuslibet entis; ergo non potest habere proprietatem ita adaequatam et propriam, quia subiectum non potest esse de essentia suae proprietatis.*

Against (2)

- I respond by denying the first part of the minor, for being really has its own properties that are distinct, if not in reality, then at least according to reason, such as one, true, good, which is something that we will show immediately in the third disputation when we shall make clear whether being is included intrinsically and *per se* in properties of this sort; and whether that principle, [namely,] that a subject is not of the essence of a property, is to be restricted either to really distinct properties or to subjects that do not express transcendental *rationes*, or whether it should instead be said that these properties are not altogether real with respect to what they add beyond being, and that it is enough that being not be included in them with respect to what they add beyond being, which is more probable, as we shall see. (*DM* I 1, 28)