

# What We Care About Now

*Metaphysics* Θ 6

# Remembering the Original Suggestion

- \* . . . and first about what is most authoritatively called potentiality, which is not however the most useful for what we want now; for potentiality and actuality (ἐνέργεια) extend further and are not spoken of only in accordance with change (κίνησις). But by speaking about this, we come to clarity also about the others in our determinations about actuality (ἐνέργεια).
- \* . . . καὶ πρῶτον περὶ δυνάμεως ἢ λέγεται μὲν μάλιστα κυρίως, οὐ μὴν χρησιμωτάτη γέ ἐστι πρὸς ὃ βουλόμεθα νῦν· ἐπὶ πλεον γάρ ἐστιν ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ ἐνέργεια τῶν μόνον λεγομένων κατὰ κίνησιν. ἀλλ' εἰπόντες περὶ ταύτης, ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῆς ἐνεργείας διορισμοῖς δηλώσομεν καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων. (*Met. Θ* 1, 1045b35-1046a4)

# Clarity Achieved?

\* Some theses introduced:

\* Power is homonymous.

\* But we can set aside the cases of *mere* homonymy

\* The core notion of power:

\*  $\phi$  is a core instance of power =<sub>chdf</sub>  $\phi$  is the source (*archê*) of change in something else or in itself *qua* other.

\* There are three kinds of powers:

\*  $\Delta$  is a power of self-preservation =<sub>df</sub>  $\Delta$  is not liable to be acted upon by *a source of change* (1046a15-19)

\*  $\Delta$  is a passive power =<sub>df</sub>  $\Delta$  is categorially suited to be acted upon *by a source of change* (1046a15-19)

\*  $\Delta$  is an active power =<sub>df</sub>  $\Delta$  is categorially suited to act upon, as a source of change, some *categorially suited passive power* (1046a15-19)

\* There are one-way and two-way powers.

\* There are non-rational and rational powers.

\* These distinctions pair, in the sense that one-way and non-rational powers are coextensive, as two-way and rational powers.

# The Main Claims of Θ 6

- \* 1048a25-30: A redirection from potentiality to actuality and back to potentiality again.
- \* 1048a30-35: Illustrations of potentiality
- \* 1048a35-b9: Reasoning by analogy
- \* 1048b9-17: An interlude on the infinite and the void
- \* 1048b18-35: Self-contained and directional actualities

# Redirection: 1048a25-30

- \* Since potentiality as it is meant in the domain of motion has been discussed, let us make determinations about actuality (ἐνέργεια): what actuality is and what sort of thing it is. For the potential will at the same time become clear to those making the distinctions, because not only do we mean this by *potentiality*, that it is that which of such a nature as to change something else or be changed by another, either unqualifiedly or in a certain manner, but [we also mean it] differently; and this is why when making our inquiries we also ran through these.
- \* Ἐπεὶ δὲ περὶ τῆς κατὰ κίνησιν λεγομένης δυνάμεως εἴρηται, περὶ ἐνεργείας διορίσωμεν τί τέ ἐστίν ἢ ἐνέργεια καὶ ποῖόν τι. καὶ γὰρ τὸ δυνατὸν ἅμα δῆλον ἔσται διαιρούσιν, ὅτι οὐ μόνον τοῦτο λέγομεν δυνατὸν ὃ πέφυκε κινεῖν ἄλλο ἢ κινεῖσθαι ὑπ' ἄλλου ἢ ἀπλῶς ἢ τρόπον τινά, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἑτέρως, διὸ ζητοῦντες καὶ περὶ τούτων διήλθομεν.

# Some Observations

- \* We are now evidently leaving the domain of motion (κίνησις) behind.
  - \* Into what domain are we thereby entering?
- \* We seem to be speaking of potentiality differently (ἐτέρωσ) in this new domain.
  - \* The purport seems to be that we have come to understand it in the domain of motion, but will now seek to a new and extended understanding.
- \* The plan, then, is to move from our understanding of potentiality in the domain of motion to actuality (in the other domain) and then, whilst focussing on that become clear at the same time about potentiality in this other domain.

# This Other Domain

\* ‘That natural science, then, is theoretical, is plain from these considerations. Mathematics also is theoretical; but whether its objects are immovable and separable from matter, is not at present clear; it is clear, however, that it considers some mathematical objects qua immovable and qua [10] separable from matter. But if there is something which is eternal and immovable and separable, clearly the knowledge of it belongs to a theoretical science,—not, however, to natural science (for natural science deals with certain movable things) nor to mathematics, but to a science prior to both. For natural science deals with things which are inseparable from matter but not immovable, and some parts of [15] mathematics deal with things which are immovable, but probably not separable, but embodied in matter; while the first science deals with things which are both separable and immovable.’ (*Met.* E 1 1026a6-16; cf. 1064a16-19, b1-3; *Top.* 145a15-16; *Phys.* 192b8-12; *DC* 298a27-32, *DA* 403a27-b2; 1064a16-19, b1-3; *EN* 1139a26-28, 1141b29-32).

# The Domain of the Immobile

- \* Here 'the domain of the mobile' must be handled with care.
  - \* After all, perceptible substances are squarely in the domain of the mobile.
    - \* Does this mean that first philosophy after all takes as its object the unmoving mover?
    - \* No: one need only revert to our earlier distinction between what moves per se (in its own right; *kath' hauto*) and what moves co-incidentally (*kata sumbebêkos*) (*Phys.* 196b23-9, 198a6-9, 211a17-23, 226a19, 254b7-14).
      - \* Some things are moved by co-inciding, but can be moved in their own rights; others can only be moved by co-inciding.
- \* 'The forms (*eidê*) and affections (*pathê*) and the place—that into which things being moved are moved—are immobile (*akinêta*), as for instance, knowledge (*epistêmê*) and heat (*thermotês*). Yet someone might raise an objection: if affections (*pathê*) are motions (*kinêseis*), and whiteness (*leukotês*) is an affection, there will be a change (*metabolê*) to a motion (*kinêsis*). (*Phys.* 224b11-15).
  - \* Aristotle's response is brief: 'Rather, it is not the whiteness (*leukotês*) which is the change, but the whitening (*leukansis*)' (*Phys.* 224b15-16).



# The Division

- \* The general differentiation at the highest level turns on the orientation of each kind of sciences:
  - \* Theoretical sciences seek knowledge:
    - \* theology or first philosophy
    - \* mathematics
    - \* physics
  - \* Practical sciences concern conduct and goodness in action.
  - \* Productive sciences aim to produce beautiful or useful objects.

# Aquinas's Take

- \* Potency and actuality are referred in most cases to things in motion, because motion is the actuality of a being in potency. But the principle aim of this branch of science [viz. first philosophy] is to consider potency and actuality not insofar as they are found in mobile beings, but insofar as they attend to being in general. Hence, potency and actuality are also found in immobile beings, for example, in intellectual ones (*Comm. in Meta. IX 5*; 1770; cf. 1786).

# Illustrations of Potentiality: 1048a30-35

- \* It is the case, then, that actuality is a thing's obtaining not in the way in which we speak of [something's obtaining] in potentiality. By *in potentiality* we mean, for instance, Hermes in the wood and the half line in the whole, because it could be separated out, and also one who knows and is not contemplating, if she is able to contemplate; [things obtaining in another way we call] *in actuality*.
- \* ἔστι δὴ ἐνέργεια τὸ ὑπάρχειν τὸ πρᾶγμα μὴ οὕτως ὥσπερ λέγομεν δυνάμει· λέγομεν δὲ δυνάμει οἷον ἐν τῷ ξύλῳ Ἑρμῆν καὶ ἐν τῇ ὅλῃ τὴν ἡμίσειαν, ὅτι ἀφαιρεθεῖη ἄν, καὶ ἐπιστήμονα καὶ τὸν μὴ θεωροῦντα, ἂν δυνατὸς ἦ θεωρῆσαι· τὸ δὲ ἐνεργεία. (Cf. *Met.* Δ 7 1017a35-b9)

# Some Observations

- \* Hitherto we have almost exclusively been looking at what it is to be a power or potentiality (*dunamis*) (the dative used only three times in Θ 1-5, but 23 times in Θ 6-9).
  - \* Now, by contrast, we are speaking of existing (or obtaining) in potentiality, or simply *potentially*.
    - \* This coheres, it seems, with the thought that we are now speaking in the idiom of first philosophy, of what belongs to all beings, as beings, just in so far as they are beings.
- \* In the first analogy, the bearer of the modal feature seems to be Hermes, the half line, and the knower.
  - \* We have not, or not overtly, identified the matter (*hylê*) as what is in potentiality.
    - \* We seem thus to be saying of some things that are not actual that they exist in potentiality, though the last example complicates this somewhat.
    - \* For at least the first two, the evidence of the truth of the claim is that they might be 'separated out' or 'abstracted' (ἀφαιρεθείη; cf. *APo.74a37*).
      - \* In the first two cases, we seem to have something left behind; in the third not, or not without a serious effort of imagination.
      - \* This suggests that separating out is sufficient by not necessary for something obtaining in potentiality

# Reasoning by Analogy: 1048a35-b9

- \* That which we wish to say is clear from the individual cases by induction, and it is not necessary to seek a definition (ὄρος) of everything, but also to see the point (συνορᾶν) of an analogy: as the builder building is to the builder able to build, and as what is awake to what is asleep, and as seeing is to one with sight but whose eyes are closed, or as what has been separated out of the matter is to the matter, or as what has been wrought is to the unwrought. Let actuality (ἐνέργεια) be defined (ἀφωρισμένη) by one part of each of these contrasts, and potentiality (δυνατόν) by the other. All these things are said to be in actuality not in the same way, but by analogy: as this is in that or is related to that, or as this other is in that other or is related to that other. For in some cases we have change (κίνησις) related to potentiality (δύναμις), and in other cases substance (οὐσία) related to some matter (*Met.* 1048a25-b9).
- \* δῆλον δ' ἐπὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα τῇ ἐπαγωγῇ ὃ βουλόμεθα λέγειν, καὶ οὐ δεῖ παντὸς ὄρον ζητεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀνάλογον συνορᾶν, ὅτι ὡς τὸ οἰκοδομοῦν πρὸς τὸ οἰκοδομικόν, καὶ τὸ ἐγρηγορῶν πρὸς τὸ καθεύδον, καὶ τὸ ὄρῶν πρὸς τὸ μῦον μὲν ὄψιν δὲ ἔχον, καὶ τὸ ἀποκεκριμένον ἐκ τῆς ὕλης πρὸς τὴν ὕλην, καὶ τὸ ἀπειργασμένον πρὸς τὸ ἀνέργαστον. ταύτης δὲ τῆς διαφορᾶς θατέρῳ μορίῳ ἔστω ἡ ἐνέργεια ἀφωρισμένη θατέρῳ δὲ τὸ δυνατόν. λέγεται δὲ ἐνεργεῖα οὐ πάντα ὁμοίως ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ ἀνάλογον, ὡς τοῦτο ἐν τούτῳ ἢ πρὸς τοῦτο, τόδ' ἐν τῷδε ἢ πρὸς τόδε· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ὡς κίνησις πρὸς δύναμιν τὰ δ' ὡς οὐσία πρὸς τινὰ ὕλην.

# Some Questions

- \* What is said and *not* said about definition?
- \* What is meant by seeing the point (συνοροῦν) of an analogy?
- \* What is meant by analogy, in *general*, in this connection?
- \* What is meant by this particular analogy?
  - \* What are the tenor and vehicle of this analogy?

# Analogy in General

- \* What does this consist in?
- \* ‘... analogy is equality of accounts (λόγων), and involves four terms at least’ (ἡ γὰρ ἀναλογία ἰσότης ἐστὶ λόγων, καὶ ἐν τέτταρσιν ἐλαχίστοις; *EN* 1131a31-2)
- \* So, we are looking not for *sameness* of accounts (= univocity), and not for asymmetric dependence of accounts (= core-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.

# The Vehicles of Analogy

- \* The builder building to the builder able to build
- \* What is awake to what is asleep
- \* What is seeing to what has one's eyes closed
- \* What has been separated out (ἀποκεκριμένον) of matter to the matter
- \* What has been wrought to the unwrought

# Two Sets of Illustrations

A

the builder building	what can build
what is awake	what is asleep
what is seeing	what is sighted, with eyes closed

B

what is separated off from matter	matter
what has been wrought	what is unwrought

# A and B Vehicles

- \* A Vehicles:

- \* entities with capacities into entities with capacities actualized

- \* these involve transitions

- \* the transitions are capacity preserving (cf. the passive capacity to be burnt)

- \* B Vehicles:

- \* unformed matter into formed matter

- \* plausibly matter into substantial compounds

- \* Recall: 'All these things are said to be in actuality not in the same way, but by analogy: as this is in that or is related to that, or as this other is in that other or is related to that other. For in some cases we have change (κίνησις) related to potentiality (δύναμις), and in other cases substance (οὐσία) related to some matter.' (1048b8-9)

- \* so, substance is to matter—but matter might be conceived here (i) diachronically or (ii) synchronically

# A Definition?

- \* 'Simple notions cannot be defined, since an infinite regress in definitions is impossible. But actuality is one of those simple notions. Hence, it cannot be defined.' —Aquinas, *Comm. in Aris. Met.*, Bk IX, Ch. 5, §1826.
- \* Still, Aristotle has not said that actuality cannot be defined, only that it is not necessary.
- \* Further, he has not said that should must advert to what is analogical; rather one should survey and see the point an analogy(cf. *Poetics* 1459b19: 'the beginning and the end must be able to be seen at one go' δύνασθαι δεῖ συνορᾶσθαι τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὸ τέλος)

# Second Order Univocity?

- \* In the domain of the immobile (first pass. . . .):
  - \* E is an actuality =<sub>df</sub> there exists some potentiality  $\Delta$  and E is  $\Delta$ 's telically specified form (or, simply:  $\Delta$  telically enformed)