

Contents

List of Abbreviations — XI

Introduction — 1

Part I: The Contemporary Debate About the Nature Question

1 The Non-Reductive-Object View — 31

- 1.1 The Core Idea of the View — 31
- 1.2 Three Problems — 32
 - 1.2.1 A Vicious Circularity — 32
 - 1.2.2 Existence Is Neither an Essential Nor an Accidental Property of an Object That Has It — 33
 - 1.2.3 This View Does Not Explain What It Is Supposed to Explain — 40

2 The Reductive-Object View — 44

- 2.1 The Core Idea of Peter van Inwagen's Version of This View — 44
 - 2.1.1 A General Problem with This View — 44
 - 2.1.2 Van Inwagen's Attempt to Solve This Problem — 46
 - 2.1.3 Van Inwagen's Motivation — 48
- 2.2 Three Problems — 54
 - 2.2.1 Reductionism Does Not Work — 54
 - 2.2.2 Existence Is Not an Essential Property of an Object — 59
 - 2.2.3 Not All Objects Which Are Identical with Themselves Exist — 61

3 The Property View — 68

- 3.1 The Core Idea of the View — 68
- 3.2 Four Problems — 70
 - 3.2.1 A Vicious Circularity — 70
 - 3.2.2 A Vicious Infinite Regress — 73
 - 3.2.3 Ontological Inflationism — 76
 - 3.2.4 The Problem of the Co-Existence of Objects and Properties — 77

4 The Unrestricted-Domain View — 80

- 4.1 The Core Idea of the View — 80
- 4.2 Two Problems — 83
 - 4.2.1 A Vicious Circularity — 83

4.2.2 Incoherence — 86

5 The Restricted-Domain View — 89

5.1 The Core Idea of the View — 89

5.2 Six Problems — 92

5.2.1 A Vicious Infinite Regress — 92

5.2.2 Ontological Inflationism — 101

5.2.3 A Vicious Circularity — 102

5.2.4 The Problem of Constitution — 104

5.2.5 Reductionism Does Not Work — 107

5.2.6 What Kind of Entity Is a REDO? — 109

Part II: The Contribution of Thomas Aquinas's View to the Debate

6 Aquinas's View on What It Is for a Substance to Exist — 118

6.1 For a Substance to Exist Is to Have *Esse* by Means of Its Essence or Form — 118

6.2 The Existence of a Substance Consists in the Participation of Its Essence or Form in *Esse* — 133

6.2.1 The Core Idea of Aquinas's View: A Substance Is an *Ens* by Participation — 135

6.2.2 How a Substance Participates in *Esse* — 137

6.3 Participation in *Esse* Results from a Metaphysical Composition of a Determinable and a Determinant — 159

6.4 Is Aquinas's View Incoherent? — 165

7 Why Aquinas's View Can Solve the Problems — 176

7.1 Why Aquinas's View Can Solve the Problems of the Property View and the Domain Views — 176

7.1.1 Solution to a Vicious Circularity — 176

7.1.2 Solution to a Vicious Infinite Regress — 178

7.1.3 Solution to Ontological Inflationism — 180

7.1.4 Solution to the Problem of Co-Existence — 185

7.1.5 Solution to the Problem of Constitution — 187

7.2 Why Aquinas's View Can Solve the Problems of the Object Views — 190

7.2.1 Solution to a Vicious Circularity — 190

- 7.2.2 Solution to the Problem That Existence Is Neither an Essential Nor an Accidental Property of an Object — **195**
- 7.2.3 Solution to the Problem That What Is Supposed to Be Explained Is Not Explained — **196**
- 7.2.4 Solution to the Three Remaining Problems — **197**

Conclusion — 200

Bibliography — 213

- A Thomas Aquinas's Works — **213**
- B Other Cited Literature — **215**

Index of Names — 221

Index of Subjects — 223

