

**FACTS VS. THINGS:
ADAM WODEHAM AND THE LATER MEDIEVAL DEBATE
ABOUT OBJECTS OF JUDGMENT**

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Drawing on Aristotle's discussion in the *Categories*, medieval philosophers generally take for granted that reality is fundamentally constituted by entities of two basic kinds: individual substances (such as stones, trees, human beings) and their accidents (such as this stone's hardness, that tree's height, Socrates' pallor). And, as a rule, they find the analytical tools afforded by a substance-accident ontology perfectly adequate for addressing philosophical and theological problems generally.¹ But, as with most rules, here too there are exceptions. In this paper, I examine one such exception: namely, that provided by a fourteenth-century philosopher, Adam Wodeham (ca. 1298-1358), who, in the course of developing a theory of judgment—in particular, a theory about the nature of the *objects* of judgment—is led to challenge this standard medieval-Aristotelian paradigm.²

As with nearly every other figure in the history of medieval philosophy, the recovery of Wodeham's legacy is still in its early stages; indeed, his writings are only now becoming available in reliable Latin editions.³ Even so, it has

¹ Although the basic correctness of the substance/accident framework itself is usually taken for granted, medieval philosophers often disagree over questions about just what a substance is, about the number and types of accidents that ought to be allowed, or about whether there are universals (in either the categories of substance or accident). For an overview of this framework see Scott MacDonald, "Medieval Philosophy," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig (London: Routledge, 1998), 269-77 and Alfred J. Freddoso, "Introduction," in Francisco Suarez, *On Creation, Conservation, and Concurrence: Metaphysical Disputations 20, 21, and 22*, trans. Alfred J. Freddoso (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2002), xxix-xlii.

² Interestingly, similar challenges arise in context of twelfth-century discussions of judgment as well. See Gabriel Nuchelmans, *Theories of the Proposition: Ancient and Medieval Conceptions of the Bearers of Truth and Falsity* (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Co, 1973), ch. 9-10 and Norman Kretzmann, "Medieval Logicians on the Meaning of the *Propositio*," *The Journal of Philosophy* no. 67 (1970): 767-787.

³ The recent publication of the critical edition of Wodeham's *Norwich Lectures* on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (Adam Wodeham, *Lectura Secunda in Librum Primum Sententiarum* (St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University Press, 1990)) and of his *Treatise on Indivisibles* (Adam Wodeham, *Tractatus Indivisibilibus* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988)) constitutes a significant advance in the recovery of Wodeham's philosophical writings. Nevertheless, until a critical edition of his most important work, the *Oxford Lectures*, has been prepared, much of his

been clear to scholars for some time that Wodeham was a philosopher of considerable stature—standing at the center of a number of important philosophical, theological, and scientific controversies in one of the liveliest periods in the history of late scholasticism. A careful student of William Ockham and John Duns Scotus, as well as an independent and original thinker in his own right, Wodeham was a highly regarded figure both at Oxford and at Paris throughout the fourteenth century.⁴ Although Wodeham’s philosophical corpus covers a wide range of issues, he is best known to historians of philosophy today for his contribution to the later medieval debate about the objects of judgment.⁵

The significance of Wodeham’s views on this issue has to do with the fact that, in the course of developing his theory of judgment, he appears to introduce a new type of entity—one which he himself refers to using the expression ‘*sic esse*’ (“being such-and-such”) and which came to be known among his contemporaries and successors as a ‘*complexe significabile*’ (“something that can be signified [only] by a propositional expression”). Although it is generally recognized that Wodeham’s account of objects of judgment is highly innovative, commentators disagree over the proper interpretation of this account. In general, they have been inclined to see Wodeham either as introducing items that are supervenient on—and nothing in addition to—ordinary substances and accidents, or else as postulating some type of abstract object (e.g. abstract meanings, say, or some other intentional

philosophy will remain largely inaccessible.

⁴ The most complete introduction to Wodeham’s life and times is William J. Courtenay, *Adam Wodeham: An Introduction to His Life and Writings* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978). See also Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987). Other discussions of Wodeham include: Rega Wood, “Wodeham, Adam,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig (London: Routledge, 1998); “Adam of Wodeham,” in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge Gargia and Timothy Noone (Cambridge: Blackwell, 2003): 77-85. A fairly comprehensive study of Wodeham’s views on cognition can be found in Onorato Grassi, *Intuizione e significato: Adam Wodeham e il problema della conoscenza nel XIV secolo* (Milan: Jaca Book, 1986).

⁵ Wodeham’s discussion of objects of judgment was, for example, among the first of his works to appear in critical edition (see, Gedeon Gál, “Adam Wodeham’s Question on the ‘Complexe Significabile’ as the Immediate Object of Scientific Knowledge,” *Franciscan Studies* no. 37 (1977): 66-102) as well as to be translated into modern languages (see, Adam Wodeham, “The Objects of Knowledge,” in *The Cambridge Translations of Medieval Philosophical Texts*, ed. Robert Pasnau (Cambridge University Press, 1994) and Dominik Perler, *Satztheorien. Texte zur Sprachphilosophie und Wissenschaftstheorie im 14. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990)).

entity).⁶ In what follows, I argue against both sorts of interpretation: against the first, I argue that Wodeham's *complexe significabilia* are a *sui generis* type of entity really distinct from individual substances and accidents; and against the second, I argue that, like such substances and accidents, they are concrete (rather than abstract). Indeed, Wodeham's *complexe significabilia* are, as I see it, best interpreted as *facts* or concrete states of affair. If I am right about this, his account of objects of judgment constitutes a fairly radical departure from the standard medieval-Aristotelian substance-accident framework. As I will show, Wodeham *himself* sees his account of the objects of judgment as involving an important *correction* to the standard interpretation of Aristotle's *Categories*.⁷

⁶ An example of the first sort of interpretation is Dominik Perler, "Late Medieval Ontologies of Facts," *The Monist* no. 77 (1994): 149-169. The second interpretation is suggested early on by Gabriel Nuchelmans, "Adam Wodeham on the Meaning of Declarative Sentences," *Historiographia Linguistica* no. 7 (1980): 177-187 and subsequently taken up by a number of other commentators such as Hermann Weidemann, "Sache, Satz und Satzverhalt: Zur Diskussion über das Objekt des Wissens im Spätmittelalter," *Vivarium* no. 29 (1991): 129-47, Katherine Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham: Optics, Epistemology and the Foundations of Semantics 1250-1345* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), and Paul Spade, *Thoughts, Words, and Things: An Introduction to Late Medieval Logic and Semantic Theory* (Version 1.0 available in PDF format at <http://pvspade.com/Logic>, 1996). Spade, it should be noted, discusses Wodeham's account of *complexe significabilia* only in passing. In general, however, he supposes that the "theory is the closest the later Middle Ages came to the present-day notion of a proposition—that is, a bearer of truth-value, and entity that is not a sentence or statement, but rather what is expressed by such sentence or statements" (166). See also Richard Gaskin, "Complex Significabilia and Aristotle's Categories," in *La tradition médiévale des catégories (XII^e-XV^e siècles)*, ed. Joël Biard and Irène Rosier-Catach (Louvain: Éditions Peeters, 2003), who, while not specifying that *complexe significabilia* are abstract entities, nevertheless suggests that such entities are truth-bearers, and that they are introduced by Wodeham to serve as the meanings (for both true and false sentences). It is important to note, that the research on Wodeham's theory of *complexe significabilia* are not extensive and what does exist is pioneering in nature. Indeed, none of the discussions listed above are dedicated solely to Wodeham's account—all of them treat his views alongside those other medieval figures (very often those of Gregory of Rimini who, until recently, was thought to have originated the notion of *complexe significabilia*).

⁷ This is significant since, in general, the radical nature of Wodeham's conclusion about objects of judgment seems to have gone largely unnoticed. This owes, no doubt, in part to the influence of Gál's initial characterization ("Adam Wodeham's Question on the 'Complex Significabile' as the Immediate Object of Scientific Knowledge") of Wodeham's position as (a) a kind of careful, "via media" between Ockham's anti-realist account of object of judgment and Chatton's realist account, and (b) a view "mutilated" by Rimini, whose own discussion of *complexe significabilia* provoked a largely negative reaction among his contemporaries because of its apparent ontological extravagance. Gál's characterization has been repeated many times in the literature. See, for example, Jack Zupko, "How it Played in the Rue de

In order to make this argument, I rely on Wodeham's discussion of judgment in Book I, Distinction 1, question 1, Article 1 of the second set of lectures on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (hereafter, simply "d.1, q.1").⁸ It is in this context—namely, a discussion about the nature of the objects of judgment—that Wodeham first invokes the notion of *complexe significabilia* and it is *only* in this context that he provides any positive account of such entities.⁹ Yet, even here, the account is rather limited. This is because Wodeham's primary aim in d.1, q.1 is not so much to provide a positive theory of *complexe significabilia* as to force his opponents to acknowledge the necessity of positing something over and above substances and accidents to serve as the objects of judgment. Accordingly, the bulk of Wodeham's discussion in d.1, q.1 is devoted to demonstrating the inadequacy of standard Aristotelian theories of judgment. The details of his own account are left largely undeveloped.

It is, no doubt, for this reason that commentators have had some difficulty assessing the precise nature of the entities Wodeham introduces to serve as objects of judgment. It is possible, however, to reconstruct much of Wodeham's own, positive account from a careful examination of his discussion and criticism of the main alternatives to it. Indeed, as I hope to show, the sorts of criticisms Wodeham makes of the standard Aristotelian accounts of judgment reveal a great deal about his own positive conception of *complexe significabilia*. In what follows, I refer to the two standard Aristotelian alternatives in response to which Wodeham develops his view as 'Aristotelian realism' and 'Aristotelian anti-realism' respectively (or just 'realism' and 'anti-realism' for short).¹⁰ Aristotelian realists hold that the

Fouarre: Reception of Adam Wodeham's Theory of the Complexe Significabile in the Arts Faculty at Paris in the Mid-Fourteenth Century," *Franciscan Studies* no. 54 (1994): 213, 217-218; Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham*; Chris Schabel, "Oxford Franciscans After Ockham: Walter Chatton and Adam Wodeham," in *Mediaeval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, ed. Gillian Evans (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002), 376-377; Wood, "Adam of Wodeham," 80.

⁸ Apparently Wodeham lectured on Lombard's *Sentences* three times: at London, Norwich, and Oxford. The *Lectura Secunda* is Wodeham's Norwich lectures. For details on the dating and context of the *Lectura Secunda* see Rega Wood, "Introduction," in Adam Wodeham, *Lectura Secunda in Librum Primum Sententiarum* (St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University Press, 1990), 30. All references are to the critical edition of the *Lectura Secunda* (hereafter just '*L.sec.*'). All translations are my own.

⁹ Wodeham mentions entities "*significabile per complexum*" elsewhere in his *L.sec* as well as in his later Oxford lectures, but the discussion in d.1, q. 1 is his only direct treatment of the nature of these entities in the *Lectura*.

¹⁰ This debate between Aristotelian 'realists' and Aristotelian 'anti-realists' over the nature of

objects of judgment are ordinary things (*res*)—namely, substances and accidents—whereas anti-realists claim that the objects of judgment are a type of mind-dependent entity. Wodeham begins his discussion in d.1, q.1 by setting out each of the standard Aristotelian positions;¹¹ he then proceeds with a lengthy discussion and criticism of each, simply allowing his own view to emerge along the way. In order to appreciate his positive account, therefore, we must trace these criticisms in some detail. Before turning to this task, however, a few preliminaries are in order.

I.

Because Wodeham's theory of judgment presupposes the technical apparatus of late-medieval logical and psychological discussions, it will be useful to start with a sketch of the framework and terminology underlying his discussion in d.1, q.1. Having done this, I then provide a summary of the sorts of considerations driving his rejection of the standard Aristotelian accounts of judgment.

I.1. *Background and Terminology.* Like many medieval philosophers, Wodeham takes for granted that the representational system that underlies human thought is semantically and syntactically language-like. As a result, his theory of judgment is framed in terms of this broader conception of the nature and structure of human (intellective) cognition or thought.¹²

The language of thought, as Wodeham conceives of it, is comprised of two basic types of mental act: apprehension and judgment.¹³ Acts of apprehension

objects of judgment should not be confused with the well-known medieval debate between 'realists' and 'nominalists' over the nature of *universals*. The two debates are utterly independent of one another.

¹¹ Wodeham describes these two positions at the outset of his discussion in d.1, q.1. "It might reasonably seem to some," he says, "that an external thing is the object of an act of knowledge or of any other sort of assent...and, similarly, to others it might seem that the object of assent is a thing in the mind." *L.sec.*, dist.1, q.1 (I: 181)

¹² There are, however, some late medieval authors who resist the notion of mental language, most notably, William Crathorn and Hugh of Lawton. Such thinkers are exceptions to this general rule. See Dominik Perler, "Crathorn on Mental Language," in *Vestigia, Imagines, Verba. Semiotics and Logic in Medieval Theological Texts*, ed. Constance Marmo, (Turnhout: Brepols 1997), 337-354 and Hester Gelber, "I cannot tell a lie: Hugh Lawton's critique of Ockham on mental language," *Franciscan Studies* no. 44 (1984): 141-79.

¹³ It is worth noting that while it is standard for medieval philosophers to speak of belief, knowledge, and other such attitudes as mental "acts", they don't mean by 'act' *activity* or *action*, but rather *actualization*. This is because, on their view, to believe or to know

are mental states in which the mind represents or entertains a given content—be it propositional or non-propositional. These acts provide the basic components of mental language. The simplest such acts, namely, “simple apprehensions” (i.e. non-propositional apprehensions), function as the atomic units or “terms” (*termini*) of the language; as such they can be combined via the mental operation of “composition” to form complex, sentential expressions.¹⁴ Wodeham refers to the simple terms of mental language variously as “concepts” (*conceptus*), “simple understandings” (*simplices intelligentiae*), or as “simple ideas” (*simplices notitiae*).¹⁵ The sentences of mental language are, as he characterizes them, “complex apprehensions” (i.e. propositional apprehensions). Although Wodeham himself refers to these complex, propositional states as “mental propositions” (*propositiones in mente*) or just “propositions” (*complexa, propositiones*), in what follows, I shall refer to them simply as ‘mental sentences’ so as to avoid confusion with the contemporary notion of proposition.

In addition to acts of propositional apprehension, Wodeham also recognizes another type of propositional act or attitude—namely, judgment. In keeping with the interpretation of thought as an inner, mental language, we can perhaps think of judicative acts as mental *assertions*—that is, mental sentences that carry a kind of assertoric force.

In general, late-medieval philosophers divide judicative acts can into two main categories: assent or dissent—though, as we shall see, Wodeham suggests a third category, namely, “hesitating” (*haesitandum*).¹⁶ Acts of assent and

something is just to actualize certain cognitive or rational capacities. Thus, an act of judgment or of cognition generally is to be understood not as a mental activity per se, but rather as an actuality—an actual *state* of intellect or mind. In this regard, even dispositional states (what medievals call “habits”) are mental acts—they are first actualities.

¹⁴ As Wodeham, explains: “no [mental] sentence is formed without composition, which is an act conjoining (*actus collativus*) something to something else.” *L.sec.*, dist. 23, q. unica (III: 311). The operation of composition is, according to Wodeham, the mental equivalent of using a copula in natural language. As he says, “When the intellect forms a proposition, it composes one thing with another...by means of the [mental] sign (*nota*) of composition, which is indicated by the word ‘is’. This mental word is a certain concept that conjoins (*conceptus comparativus*) either by the conjoining of one thing to itself or else to some other. And this is either affirmatively in which case it affirms one thing to be the same as itself or as another; or negatively (by attaching a concept of negation) in which case it denies the identity of one thing with itself or as another.” *L.sec.*, prol., q. 6 (I: 147).

¹⁵ Although the Latin expression ‘*notitia*’ is often rendered as ‘knowledge’ in English, it should be clear that, in this context, such a translation would be misleading since typically knowledge is taken to be a propositional attitude. Clearly the state Wodeham is referring to here is non-propositional in nature.

¹⁶ Apparently, however, there was some debate in the later fourteenth century (perhaps

dissent may be further subdivided into more specific propositional—or, we might say, ‘judicative’—attitudes such as belief, knowledge, doubt, opinion, faith, etc. Thus, when one takes a given content as true (say, by believing, knowing, or opining) she is said to *assent* to it; when she takes it to be false (say, by disbelieving, or doubting) she is said to *dissent* from it. Wodeham describes such attitudes of assent and dissent as a kind of mental “nod” (*adnuere*). This is because, as he explains, mental states of judgment (that is, assent and dissent) are a kind of “mental concession” by which one “can agree or not agree as if by mentally saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’, or by hesitating [between agreeing and disagreeing].”¹⁷ Importantly, however, he goes on to suggest that an act of assent should not be thought of as a “blind” (*caecus*) mental nod. In other words, we shouldn’t think of acts of judging as a *mere* nodding or, as it were, an empty cognitive attitude, but rather as a fully representational state.¹⁸ Thus, Wodeham insists that in some sense “every assent [or dissent] is a kind of apprehension although not every apprehension is an assent or dissent.”¹⁹ As he sees it, acts of judgment are a kind of mental sentence, but unlike apprehensions, such sentences are, as it were, accompanied by something akin to an assertion sign (or what Frege aptly calls the ‘judgment stroke’).

In addition to taking for granted the distinctions among these different types of mental states (namely, apprehensions vs. judgments, and simple vs. complex apprehensions), Wodeham also presupposes a certain analysis of the logical and psychological relations that obtain among them. In this respect, Wodeham is following his predecessor, William Ockham.²⁰ According to this analysis, judgments always presuppose for their formation the (logically) prior

beginning with Gregory Rimini) about whether assent is really distinct type of act from dissent. Rimini argued that there is really just assent to a given content and assent to its contradictory. See Gabriel Nuchelmans, *Judgment and proposition: from Descartes to Kant* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1983), 90-91.

¹⁷ *L.sec.*, prol., q. 6 (I: 173).

¹⁸ Indeed, Wodeham even goes so far as to suggest that acts of assent or judgment may be classified (as with acts of apprehension) as intuitive or abstractive acts. (See *L.sec.*, prol., q. 6 (I: 174.)) Elsewhere, Wodeham also suggests that acts of will (i.e., “of seeking and avoiding, and thus enjoying” (*appetendi et odiendi, et ita frui*)) should also be understood as intrinsically representational states. (See, *L.sec.*, dist.1, q.5 (I: 278.)) Insofar as this way of characterizing such acts is fairly non-standard, Wodeham tends to be cautious in his statement of such views.

¹⁹ *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.5 (I: 278, 280).

²⁰ Ockham’s discussion of the divisions and ordering among mental acts is in the Prologue of his *Ordinatio*, q. 1. See William Ockham, *Opera Philosophica et Theologica* (St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University Press, 1967-89, *OTh* 1, 16-22; 51, 58ff. Ockham says that every act of assent presupposes a prior complex apprehension corresponding to, and “partially causing” it.

occurrence of certain simple and complex apprehensions (which ones exactly are determined by the content of the judgment in question).²¹ Thus, on Wodeham's view, in order to form the judgment SOCRATES IS PALE, we must first have not only the simple apprehensions or concepts SOCRATES and PALENESS, but also form the complex apprehension which is the mental sentence involving both of them (namely, SOCRATES IS PALE).²² It is clear that we can't form the judgment unless we possess the relevant concepts. But neither, Wodeham thinks, can we form a judgment without first formulating the relevant complex apprehension—that is, mental sentence—from them. This, he says, is because “a simple awareness or concept never suffices for causing an assent unless a propositional act is formed from it.”²³ As Wodeham sees it, merely thinking about Socrates or the property of being pale will not suffice to generate the judgment that Socrates is pale. On the contrary, in order to form this judgment we must first entertain the complete thought SOCRATES IS PALE. Indeed, on Wodeham's view, this prior act of propositional apprehension is causally necessary for forming the corresponding judgment.²⁴

The foregoing analysis of the ordering among mental acts has an important consequence for the *objects* of judgment. What it entails is that that we can determine a given judgment's object just by determining the object of the complex apprehension (or mental sentence) which (logically) precedes and causes it. Thus, in order to determine the object of the judgment that SOCRATES IS PALE, we need only determine the object of the preceding

²¹ This is the case at least in the ordinary course of things—Wodeham, like other medieval thinkers, makes exceptions for *cases* of divine intervention.

²² Here and in what follows, I use CAPS to mention expressions in mental language (and single quotes plus CAPS to mention a mental expression that, in turn, mentions another mental expression). I use single quotes to mention expressions in natural language.

²³ *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 189).

²⁴ Wodeham is very explicit in claiming that a judgment is (at least partially) *caused* by the formation of a mental sentence. He argues for this by pointing out that in the case of certain self-evident truths, the act of forming or apprehending a self-evident truth (i.e. by forming a mental sentence which expresses it) will immediately cause a corresponding act of assent. Such evident propositional apprehensions are “suited to necessitate the intellect in which they exist to assent that it is the case as that sentence signifies.” Wodeham's notion of ‘evidentness’ is a fairly technical one: he distinguishes three ways in which a mental sentence might be called “evident” (see his discussion in *L.sec.*, prol., q. 6 (I: 163-4). In the first two of the three ways, the evidentness of the mental sentence is such that its formation is *not* sufficient to bring about an ensuing act of assent (in most cases an act of will is also required or the formation of other mental sentences). In such cases, however, the formation of such a sentence is still counted as a *partial* cause of the ensuing judgment. In the case of mental sentences evident in the third way, the mere formation of the sentence is, by itself, sufficient to produce an ensuing act of assent.

propositional apprehension *SOCRATES IS PALE*. And this is because they share the same content.²⁵ Because this consequence functions as a kind of rule in Wodeham's thinking, it is worth setting out explicitly:

Wodeham's Rule: the object of a given act of judgment is the same as the object of the mental sentence that precedes (and causes) that judgment.

Although this rule figures in Wodeham's reasoning at a number of points in his discussion, he expressly states it only toward the very end of his discussion in d.1, q.1. He initially states the rule in connection with a specific type of assent (the details of which we can here ignore), but then goes on to formulate it for assent more generally:

Speaking of acts of assent that are unqualifiedly evident, the immediate object of the act of assenting is the total object of the [mental] sentence that necessitates the assent. Speaking of acts of assent more generally, the immediate total object [of an act of assent] is the total object or total significate of the mental sentence that immediately corresponds, co-causes, and is necessarily presupposed by it.²⁶

In addition to containing a statement of Wodeham's Rule, this passage contains two further features worth pausing over. First, notice that in stating the rule Wodeham speaks of the object of judgment or "assent" as the "total" object of the prior apprehension or mental sentence. He does so in order to distinguish the object of the judgment *taken as a whole* from what he elsewhere refers to as its "partial" objects—namely, the objects of its constituent concepts. The distinction is important because Wodeham wants to emphasize that the object of a judicative attitude is the *total* object of the prior complex or propositional apprehension—and not the objects of any of the simple apprehensions from which it is composed.

It is also worth noting that in the foregoing passage, Wodeham characterizes the objects of judgment by speaking of them not only as the total objects of the mental sentences that precede and cause them, but also as their total "significates" (*significata*). Indeed, throughout his discussion in d.1, q.1, Wodeham habitually speaks of the object of judgment in semantic terms, as that which "is signified" both by the judgment and by the mental sentence that

²⁵ Although they share the same content the two acts differ with respect to *force*.

²⁶ "Sexto conclusio est quod immediatum obiectum actus assentiendi est obiectum totale complexi necessitantis ad assensum, loquendo de assensu simpliciter evidenti. Vel generaliter loquendo, eius obiectum immediatum totale est obiectum totale seu significatum totale propositionis immediate sibi conformis, concausantis illum et necessario sibi praesuppositae, vel obiecta totalia multarum propositionum talium." *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 192).

precedes it. As he says elsewhere “the total *object* of assent is the total *significate* of the mental sentence necessitating the assent”.²⁷ Although the medieval notion of signification does not precisely map onto any single notion in contemporary semantic theory, it is clear from the context of Wodeham’s discussion as a whole that he understands it to be a broadly referential relation (where by ‘broadly referential’ I mean only to distinguish his notion of signification from contemporary semantic notions of sense or meaning).²⁸ Thus, as will become clear, the *significatum* of a given sentence or judgment does not function for Wodeham as its representational content or meaning.²⁹ Instead, as he characterizes it, the ‘total significate’ (and, so, total object) of a judgment is that entity which is uniquely identified or picked out by a judgment *as a whole* (as well as by the mental sentence preceding it).³⁰

1.2 The Motivation for Complex Significabilia. We are now in a position to see why Wodeham thinks it necessary to go beyond mere substances and accidents to account for the objects or significates of judgment. Consider again the judgment (or mental sentence) SOCRATES IS PALE. Taken as a whole, this mental state is clearly not just about the individual substance, Socrates, (though it is partially about him). Nor is it just about one of his accidents, namely, paleness (though here again, it is partially about that). Nor again is it plausible to say that it is about the aggregate of Socrates and his pallor. On the contrary,

²⁷ *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 193).

²⁸ On the notion of signification in medieval semantics, see Paul Spade, “The Semantics of Terms,” in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) and Earline Jennifer Ashworth, “Medieval Theories of Singular Terms,” (2003) in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Zalta (Spring 2006), forthcoming URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2006/entries/propositions/>. As Spade and Ashworth both make clear, the notion of signification *cannot* be assimilated to our contemporary notion of sense or meaning, despite its psychological overtones (to signify something, as medievals often characterize signification, is to ‘make it known’ or to ‘bring it to mind’). Of course, this is not to say, as Ashworth rightly points out, that medieval thinkers lack the notion of sense or meaning, but only that, as a rule, they don’t think of the sense or meaning of an expression as some kind of *entity*—i.e., one to which the expression somehow relates.

²⁹ See section 3.3 below where I argue that Wodeham is, in fact, committed to distinguishing between the *significatum* (i.e. referent) of a judgment and its representational content.

³⁰ Interestingly, although Wodeham refers to objects of judgment as the entities “signified” by judgments (and by the sentences which express them), he *also* claims that these same entities are what a judgment and sentence (or rather their nominalizations) *supposit* for. (Supposition is the semantic function an expression has when used in the context of a given sentence; whereas, by contrast, signification is a semantic property an expression has independently of its use or its occurrence in a sentence.)

the judgment *as whole* is about *Socrates's being pale*. But, it is hard to see what this entity or object could be if not a fact or concrete state of affairs involving Socrates and paleness as constituents.

Wodeham himself develops this line of reasoning by focusing on certain syntactic features of the expressions we use in natural language to express a given judgment. As Wodeham points out, when we express the judgment *SOCRATES IS PALE*, we employ not just a subject and a predicate term ('Socrates' and 'pale', respectively), but also a copula. That we do so, he thinks, constitutes grounds for thinking that the judgment expressed by this sentence is not merely about Socrates or paleness, but about something further—namely, the obtaining of a connection or relation between them. As he explains,

[The expression] 'to be' (*esse*)—which is the sign (*nota*) of composition—signifies either something or nothing. If it does not signify (or consignify) anything, there is no reason for it to appear in an expression. If it signifies something, it doesn't signify any one thing more than another since it relates indifferently to all beings (*entium*) whatsoever and can join any one of them with any other. Thus, whether it signifies inherence or composition, or the unity or identity [that exists] in reality between the terms of the sentence (or, rather, the things signified by those terms), it will always be the case that the sentence [as a whole] signifies some thing or things not signified by its subject and predicate expressions.³¹

According to Wodeham, the best explanation for the presence of the copula in speech is that it introduces something in addition to the entities designated by the subject and predicate expressions flanking it. Given its unique contribution to the semantic value of sentential expressions, such as 'Socrates is pale' it follows that the referent of such expressions (and, likewise, the object of the judgments they express) is something other than—something in addition to—the individual substance and accidents to which its subject and predicate terms refer.

³¹ "Item, aut ly 'esse', quod est nota compositionis, aliquid significat aut nihil. Si nihil significat nec consignificat, frustra ponitur in oratione. Si aliquid, et non magis unum quam aliud, quia indifferenter respicit quidlibet entium, et quodlibet potest copulare cum quolibet. Et sive significat inhaerentiam sive compositionem a parte rei, sive unitatem et identitatem inter extrema vel significata per extrema propositionis, semper habebitur quod propositio significat aliquid vel aliqua quod non significatur per subiectum vel praedicatum." *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 185). Although this passage is drawn from a section in which Wodeham is presenting the anti-realist's view it is an argument he returns to later on in his discussion when defending his own position. As will become clear, the anti-realist and Wodeham agree with the conclusion of this passage—viz. that what is signified by a sentence (or judgment) is not the entity signified by its subject or predicate expressions, but rather by the sentence as a whole. Where they disagree is over whether such an entity is mental or extramental.

As Wodeham puts it, the referent of sentences (and of judgments) must be something “complexely signifiabile” (*complexe significabile*)—that is, it must be something that can be designated by—and only by—a complex (or sentential) expression.

Although Wodeham takes these sorts of considerations to show that an adequate theory of judgment requires the introduction of a type of entity distinct from Aristotelian substances and accidents, he is well aware that Aristotelians have resources available to them for resisting this conclusion. Thus, in order to appreciate the complete case he develops for his view, as well as the specific nature of the entities he means to introduce, we need to turn to details of his discussion in d.1, q.1—the bulk of which consists in an in-depth consideration and critique of the two standard Aristotelian accounts of judgment. I begin with his criticism of Aristotelian anti-realism.

II.

As indicated earlier, Wodeham divides his opponents into two groups—realists and anti-realists—depending on whether they think the objects of judgment are mental representations (*signi*) or things (*res*). We can think of these two positions as corresponding to two different sorts of response that Aristotelians might take to the semantic and syntactic considerations Wodeham adduces in favor of *complexe significabilia*. The Aristotelian anti-realist, for example, is willing to grant that the syntactic and semantic complexity of judgment (and corresponding sentences) implies a corresponding complexity in its object—but rather than take this as grounds for postulating a heretofore unrecognized type of entity, they take it as a reason to deny that judgments (taken as a whole) refer to anything in extramental reality. By contrast, Aristotelian realists will simply insist that the syntactic and semantic structure of a given judgment (or of any sentence used to express it) is perfectly consistent with its referring to a simple substance or accident.

Aristotelian anti-realists, as Wodeham depicts them, are willing to concede that the object of the judgment SOCRATES IS PALE is not merely Socrates, or his pallor or even the aggregate of the two; rather its object is *Socrates’s being pale*. Unlike Wodeham, however, the anti-realists deny that *Socrates’s being pale* is a new type of object, or something in addition to ordinary substances and accidents; on the contrary they think it is a mind-dependent object—a way of thinking about ordinary things such as Socrates or pallor. Thus, according to the anti-realist, to believe or judge SOCRATES IS PALE is not to assent to

Socrates (or to some property or feature of him), but rather to assent to a *way of thinking* about him.³²

Although a number of Wodeham's predecessors and contemporaries defend some version of anti-realism, Wodeham himself associates the view primarily with his Franciscan predecessors John Duns Scotus (d. 1308) and William Ockham (d.1347). He not only mentions both explicitly, but also relies heavily on them for his development and discussion of Aristotelian anti-realism.³³ According to Scotus and Ockham—at least as Wodeham interprets them—acts of judgment are not in the first place acts that are directed at ordinary extramental things, but are rather directed at mental sentences, which are themselves about such things. Thus, the judgment SOCRATES IS PALE, is a mental act or state that takes as its object another mental act or state, namely, the act of apprehending (i.e. the mental sentence) SOCRATES IS PALE. According to the anti-realist, therefore, judicative states such as belief and knowledge turn out to be what he refers to as “reflexive” states—or, what we might call “second-order” states—that is, they are mental states that relate to other mental states as object. Accordingly, when Wodeham summarizes Scotus and Ockham's view, he says: “to assent that it *is such-and-such* in reality is, according to those [who hold this view], just to assent to a mental sentence that signifies as much.”³⁴ Thus, on their view as Wodeham interprets it, “every assent is a reflexive act”.³⁵

Wodeham raises two different kinds of objection to the anti-realist position. The first focuses on the sheer implausibility of the anti-realist account of judgment—that is, on what appears patently or immediately false in the view. The second sort of objection goes a bit deeper. In particular, Wodeham thinks he can demonstrate that anti-realism, at least the version developed by Scotus and Ockham, is internally inconsistent. Let us consider each of these

³² Accordingly, the anti-realist position is perfectly compatible with the standard Aristotelian substance-accident scheme. The anti-realist will identify *ways of thinking* with entities falling in the category of Quality—namely, a mental quality (inhering in the mind or intellect).

³³ It is by no means clear, however, that Wodeham has got Scotus and Ockham right—that is, it is not clear that he's correct in characterizing of their views as 'anti-realist'. I shall ignore this complication in what follows.

³⁴ *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I:198).

³⁵ For, on his view, when the intellect forms a judgment it does so by first forming (i) a simple act of apprehension directed at some extramental object, say *a*, and then forming (ii) a propositional act of apprehension—i.e. a way of thinking about that object, say *as F*, and then finally (iii) “there is another act, a reflexive one” by which the intellect assents to the propositional act—viz. to the act of thinking ‘A IS F’. See, *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 198).

objections in turn beginning with the first since his criticisms here are fairly intuitive and can be summarized relatively quickly.

II.1 First Objections to Aristotelian Anti-realism. To begin, Wodeham notes, the anti-realist account of judgment conflicts with our own introspective or phenomenological experience of judging. In general, when we form a belief or judgment we don't take ourselves to be judging about—or, in most cases, even to be aware of—our own mental states.³⁶ As Wodeham explains,

experience shows that one's assent usually refers to something's being such-and-such *in reality* (*sic esse a parte rei*)... it is not as if assent bears on a mental sentence, rather it is obviously [assent] directly to something's being such-and-such *in reality*.³⁷

There may, of course, be cases in which we attend to our own mental states and form thoughts or judgments about them. But such cases are the *exception*, not—as the anti-realist supposes—the rule. What is more, we typically suppose that what we believe, know, understand (and so on) obtains independently of the mind. Thus, in general, when we form a judgment, we take it to be directed at how things really stand in the external world—not about our ways of thinking or representing it. Wodeham himself puts the point this way:

The object of, for example, [the judgment or spoken sentence] 'God is God' is *God's being God*. Likewise, the significate of 'a human being is pale' (or 'paleness inheres in a human') is *a human's being pale* (or *paleness inhering in the human*). But these objects are not mental sentences, since if no such sentence existed in the natural realm, God would nonetheless be God, and the human being would [still] be pale (or paleness would [still] inhere in the human). ... And from this I argue for my thesis: namely, that something's being such-and-such (*sic esse*) in reality or its not being such-and-such (*sic non esse*) does not depend on an act of the mind or on any representation (*signo*).³⁸

³⁶ Wodeham does go on, however, to note that Scotus attempts a response to this sort of objection. (See, *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 187.)) As we shall see, however, Wodeham's whole case against anti-realism does not rest on these first, *prima facie*, objections.

³⁷ "Item, experientia dat quod frequenter assensus cadi supra 'sic esse a parte rei', puta assensio quod vos sedetis ibi, et quasi non fertur super complexum sed potissime [et] directe ad 'sic esse in re'." *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 186).

³⁸ "Puta, obiectum huius 'Deus est Deus' est Deum esse Deum; et huius 'homo est albus' vel 'homini inest albedo' significatum est hominem esse album vel homini inesse albedinem. Nec hae sunt propositiones, quia si nulla propositio esset in rerum natura, nihilominus Deus esset Deus, et homo esset albus vel homini inesset albedo. ... Ex hoc arguitur ad propositum: sic esse a parte rei vel sic non esse non dependet ab actu animae vel ab aliquo signo." *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 193-4)

This point about the mind independence of objects of judgment is, Wodeham thinks, especially significant when it comes to objects of Aristotelian demonstrative *scientia* (which, we may recall, is the attitude in terms of which Wodeham specifically frames his whole discussion in d.1, q.1). This is because the kind of knowledge yielded by Aristotelian demonstrative science is supposed to be *explanatory*, that is to say, it is supposed to provide insight into the very nature or essence of things, or in the Aristotelian terminology, into their ultimate “causes”.³⁹ As Wodeham points out, however, if *all* judgments (including *scientia*) were second-order states directed at other mental states then,

in that case, knowing would not be cognizing the cause of a thing. ...The inference here is clear: since a mental sentence is not the cause of a thing, merely cognizing a mental sentence would not be cognizing [of something] that it is the cause...⁴⁰

Ironically, therefore, Aristotelian anti-realism can be ruled out on the grounds that it is incompatible with the dictates of Aristotelian science.

Although the foregoing considerations might seem more than sufficient to dispense with anti-realism, Wodeham is willing to grant, for the sake of argument, the anti-realists’ claim that all judgments are reflexive in order to show a further problem with their view. (This is a characteristic strategy of Wodeham’s—namely, to call attention to, and then set aside, certain implausible features of a view in order to identify deeper, internal difficulties for it.) In the case of anti-realists such as Scotus and Ockham, Wodeham thinks that he can show that they are committed *by their own principles* to the view that something *other than* mind-dependent entities serves as the object of judgment. Because Wodeham’s argument here turns both on his analysis of the details of Scotus and Ockham’s account of judgment, and on his particular conception of what it is for something to be an object of judgment, it requires a bit more development than this first set of objections. Nonetheless, because it

³⁹ Scientific knowledge, according to the *Posterior Analytics*, is a kind of inferential knowledge arrived at through a demonstrative syllogism. This “knowledge producing syllogism” is, on Aristotle’s account, the vehicle for knowledge which is necessary, universal, and deeply explanatory. Although his conception of how knowledge is acquired is certainly not Platonic, Aristotle’s characterization of knowledge reveals a Platonic influence, for it concedes—or is at least clearly intended to capture—Plato’s notion that knowledge is stable, of essences and their definitions, and is of causes. Cf. *Posterior Analytics* 1, c.2 (71b10-34).

⁴⁰ “Tum quia tunc scire non esset causam rei cognoscere...Consequentia patet, quia complexum non est causa rei nec cognoscere complexum praecise esset cognoscere quoniam illius est causa...” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 185-6).

is both interesting in its own right and sheds considerable light on Wodeham's own views about the objects of judgment I will examine this further objection in some detail.

II.2 Second Objection to Aristotelian Anti-realism. Wodeham's second objection depends on certain details of the specific philosophical psychology presupposed by Scotus and Ockham's account of judgment.⁴¹ As we shall see, this account is similar to that presupposed by Wodeham himself but, as Wodeham goes on to show, this account is inconsistent with the anti-realist's view about the nature of the objects of judgment. In order to show this, he begins by summarizing their account of the process by which the intellect forms a judgment.

On this [anti-realist] view, the process is as follows. First, a thing is apprehended in a simple act of understanding (*simplici intelligentia*). Second, a complex thought (*compositio*) is formed—one that is evident in the third way.⁴² Third, that complex thought (or mental sentence) is apprehended by a simple [reflexive] apprehension. Finally, one assents to that mental sentence, and does so in such a way that although the assent itself is a certain sort of apprehension (not, of course, the [preceding] apprehension by which it is caused), it is not an apprehension that something *is such-and-such* (as the mental sentence signifies) ... but is rather an apprehension only of the mental sentence. By means of this [assent] one apprehends the [mental sentence's] correspondence to that which is apprehended through it (namely, through that mental sentence)—and [does so] through the simple awareness that mediates between the conceived sentence and the assent.⁴³

Although the details of Wodeham's description here require some unpacking, the overall picture of the judgment-forming process is clear enough. The process starts with “a simple act of understanding”—say the act of

⁴¹ See, *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 186-188).

⁴² As noted above (see n. 24), Wodeham distinguishes three ways in which a given act might be 'evident'. The details of this account needn't, however, concern us here.

⁴³ “[S]ecundum istam viam quod iste est processus: primo apprehenditur res simplici intelligentia; secundo formatur compositio evidens tertio modo; tertio apprehenditur apprehensione simplici illa compositio seu complexum; et ultimo assentitur complexo, ita quod licet assensus sit quaedam apprehensio (non illa quidem qua mediante causatur), non tamen apprehensio quod ita sit sicut per propositionem significatur...sed tantum ipsius complexi, quo apprehenditur conformitas eius ad illud quod per eam (propositionem scilicet) apprehenditur, et per notitiam simplicem, mediantem inter propositionem quae concipitur et assensum.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 188). Wodeham's description here looks to be an attempt to explicate some of Scotus's remarks on the formation of a judgment. Indeed, just before this passage, Wodeham rehearses several claims Scotus makes in his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* about the nature of judgment. (Cf. *ibid.*, 186-7.) Wodeham is, however, also clearly assuming that the account here fits Ockham's views as well.

apprehending a house or whiteness—followed by the formation of “a complex thought” (*compositio*) or “mental sentence” (*complexum, propositionem*)—say, THE HOUSE IS WHITE (here I use an example to which Wodeham himself, as we shall see, appeals a bit later on). These first two stages of the process account for the fact that every judgment presupposes, in the first place, the possession of certain simple conceptions on the basis of which the mind is able to formulate or entertain complex, propositional thoughts.

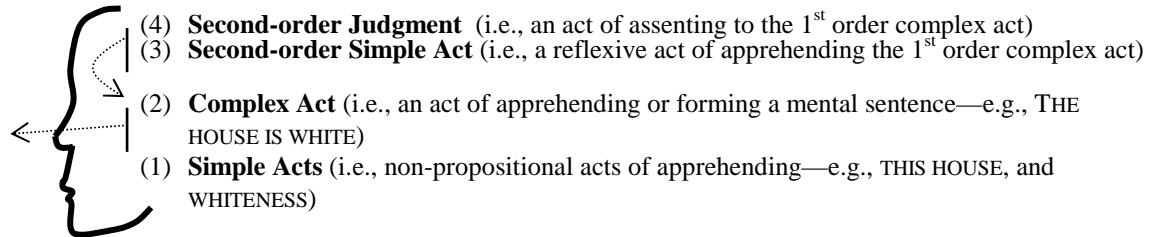
These first two stages are not, however, sufficient for the formation of an act of judgment. For, if all judgments are really reflexive as Scotus and Ockham assume, there must be a further apprehensive act—one by which, as Wodeham points out, “the complex thought or mental sentence is apprehended.” This third stage in the process is a second-order, or reflexive apprehension: it is an apprehension of the prior propositional act or, in the case of our example, an apprehension of the mental sentence THE HOUSE IS WHITE. Wodeham assumes that there must, on the anti-realist account, be such a second-order act, since if judgment is about or directed at an act of thinking as its object, there must first be some awareness or apprehension of the act toward which the judgment is directed. In other words, there must be an act of apprehending the mental sentence about which a judgment is formed. For just as one has to have an act of apprehending Socrates in order to judge about him, likewise one has to apprehend the mental sentence itself if one is to judge about *it*.

The fourth and final stage of belief or judgment formation is the judicative act itself—that is, the act by which one assents (or dissents) to the mental sentence thus apprehended. Now it is important to notice precisely what Wodeham says about the act of judging or assent itself. He says,

although the assent is a kind of apprehension ... it is not an apprehension that something is such-and-such...rather it is an apprehension only of the mental sentence.

In saying this, Wodeham is highlighting the fact that, according to anti-realists such as Scotus and Ockham, the object of a given judgment or assent is not an extra-mental entity, rather it is something mental or mind dependent. It may be useful to summarize the four-stage process, as we’ve got it so far, in the following way (see Figure 1):

Figure 1: Judgment formation according to Scotus and Ockham



As Figure 1 makes clear, the first two stages of judgment formation involve first-order acts directed at items in extramental reality, whereas both the judgment itself and the apprehensive act that precedes it are reflexive or second-order states taking as their object a first-order “complex act”—that is, the mental sentence depicted at stage 2.

This much of Wodeham’s description is of the anti-realist psychology is clear. What is puzzling, however, is that immediately after claiming that the judgment is, on the anti-realist view, an apprehension “only” of the mental sentence, Wodeham immediately goes on to add that “by this assent one apprehends [the mental sentence’s] correspondence to what is apprehended through it.” But what can this mean? How can the judgment simultaneously be an apprehension *only* of a mental sentence and at the same time be an apprehension of that sentence’s correspondence to reality?⁴⁴

Wodeham’s point can, I think, be made clear if we draw a distinction between the judgment’s object or referent (namely, that entity which it picks out or represents) and its representational content (namely, the way in which it represents that entity). For if we read it with this distinction in mind, we can say that when Wodeham speaks of a judgment as being an apprehension *only* of a mental sentence, he is calling attention to the anti-realist’s account of the *object* of the judgment—namely, his account of that entity to which the judgment refers. On the other hand, when Wodeham speaks of a judgment’s being an apprehension of that mental sentence’s *correspondence to reality*, we can interpret him as calling our attention to the judgment’s representational content. If something like this is right, it follows that on the Scotist and Ockhamist account the only way a judgment can have another mental act as an object—say, the mental sentence THE HOUSE IS WHITE—is if the judgment’s content represents that mental sentence in some way—say, as being true or as corresponding to reality. It’s not hard, moreover, to see why Wodeham might

⁴⁴ Wodeham’s characterization of the assent here resembles Ockham’s account of reflexive assent at *Quodlibet* IV.16. See, William Ockham, *Quodlibetal Questions*. Trans. Alfred Freddoso and Francis Kelly (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 311)

think something like this is what the anti-realist has in mind. After all, if one is going to assent to a mental sentence (that is, make a mental sentence the object of one's assent), one would do so only because one judges that the mental sentence in question is true or corresponds to reality. (What is more, given that judgments are always judgments that such-and such is the case, it must be the case that the judgment involves predicating *something* of the mental sentence in question.) And provided we have the distinction between a judgment's representational content and its object in mind, one and the same judgment can accomplish both of these things. The content of the judgment is that the prior complex act—that is, the mental sentence—corresponds to reality, whereas the object of the judgment is the sentence itself.

Having set out the anti-realist's account of judgment formation, Wodeham now attempts to show that it leads to trouble—in particular, that it *entails* that the object of these second-order judicative states is not merely first-order mental sentences, but rather a fact or state of affairs that contains the mental sentence merely as one of its constituents. His argument proceeds in several steps. He begins, in a first step, by arguing that, as it stands, the account of judgment formation is psychologically inadequate. As we've seen, on the anti-realist's account, the act of judging (see stage 4 in Figure 1) is immediately preceded by a “simple act of apprehending the mental sentence” (see stage 3) to which assent is given. The idea is that, once one is aware of the mental sentence, one is in a position to form a judgment with respect to it. It's precisely this claim, however, that Wodeham finds objectionable. For Wodeham insists that

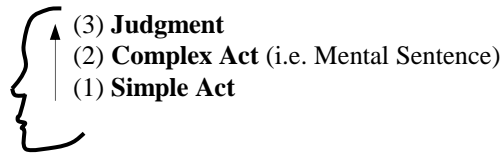
a simple awareness never suffices for causing assent unless a mental sentence is formed on the basis of it. ... But [on the foregoing picture] matters are such that the simple understanding [that precedes the judgment] is an act of cognizing the mental sentence as object in just the way that a house or whiteness is an object [of a simple act of understanding].⁴⁵

On Wodeham's view—and here he takes for granted the anti-realist will concede the point—the mere awareness or apprehension of the mental sentence is not by itself sufficient to generate an act of assent with respect to it. To see why, we need only recall our earlier discussion of the logical ordering among mental acts (namely, in section 2.1). As we noted there, every act of judgment or assent presupposes a corresponding *complex* or *propositional* apprehension

⁴⁵ “nunquam simplex notitia sufficit ad causandum assensum nisi ex ea formetur complexum... Modo ita est quod illa simplex intelligentia est actus cognoscendi propositionem ut obiectum, sicut et domum vel albedinem ut obiectum.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 189).

(as illustrated in Figure 2 below)—the object of which will be the same as the object of the judgment.

Figure 2: Logical ordering of mental acts



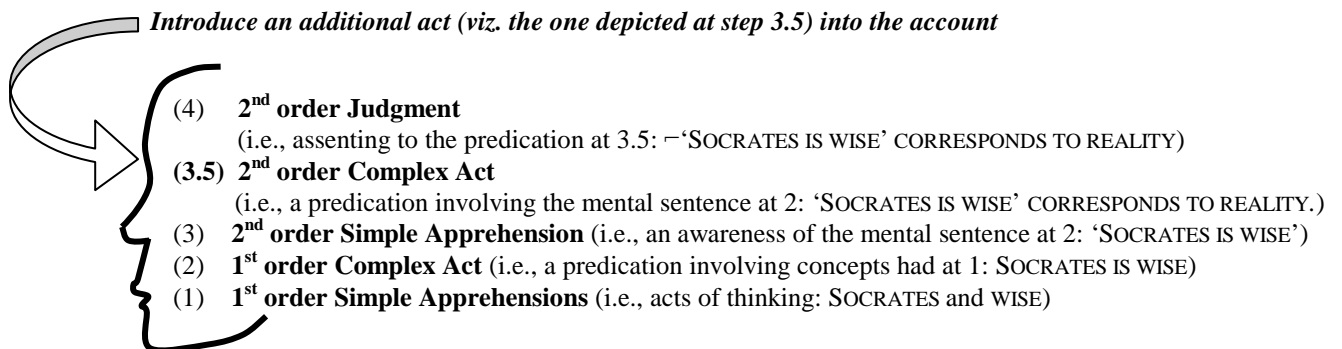
Notice that, as it stands, the account offered by Scotus and Ockham has judgment following a *simple* apprehension, not a complex one (see again Figure 2). In order to see why this is problematic, we need only consider a parallel example involving a first-order judgment—say the judgment THE HOUSE IS WHITE. We cannot, as Wodeham points out, form such a judgment merely on the basis of a simple apprehension of a house or of whiteness (or even both). On the contrary, we must first form a predication on the basis of these simple apprehensions. That is, we must first form the propositional thought: THE HOUSE IS WHITE. Now the same thing holds whether we conceive of judgments as a first- or second-order mental act. As it stands, therefore, Wodeham thinks it is clear that Scotus and Ockham’s account is incomplete.⁴⁶ For, as he puts it, the account as it stands has judgment being preceded by, “a *simple* understanding—that is, an act of cognizing a mental sentence as object in just the way that a house or whiteness is an object [of a first order simple understanding]”.

Thus, Wodeham thinks that, in order to make the account psychologically acceptable, it must be revised. This brings us to what we might think of as the second step in Wodeham’s argument. In the second step of the argument, Wodeham introduces the modification that he thinks Scotus and Ockham’s account requires. In particular, he argues that their account requires the introduction of another mental act into the process leading up to judgment: namely, a second-order, “complex” or propositional act. For, as Wodeham argues, just as we cannot form a judgment or assent about the house, without

⁴⁶ Wodeham assumes that his anti-realist opponents will concede the point since, as noted earlier (see n. 20 above), his own views about the logical ordering of mental acts are informed by Ockham’s own discussion of the issue. Thus, Wodeham takes himself simply to be drawing out the implications of Ockham’s (and, he assumes, Scotus’s) own account of the psychology of judgment. In particular, he seems to think they have simply overlooked the point that a reflexive judgment requires not only the formation of a first order mental sentence, but also a reflexive mental sentence (namely, one which predicates truth of the first order mental sentence).

first forming a mental sentence or predication involving it—e.g. THE HOUSE IS WHITE—so also we cannot form a judgment or assent about a mental sentence without forming a further sentence or predication involving *it*—e.g. THIS THOUGHT IS TRUE (or THIS THOUGHT CORRESPONDS TO REALITY). So, according to Wodeham, in addition to the second-order *simple* apprehension of the mental sentence assented to, there must also be a second-order, *complex* or propositional apprehension, which will be an act of predicating something of that mental sentence. Accordingly, we may think of Wodeham as emending Scotus and Ockham’s account by introducing an additional act, namely, the sort of act described in Figure 3 below:

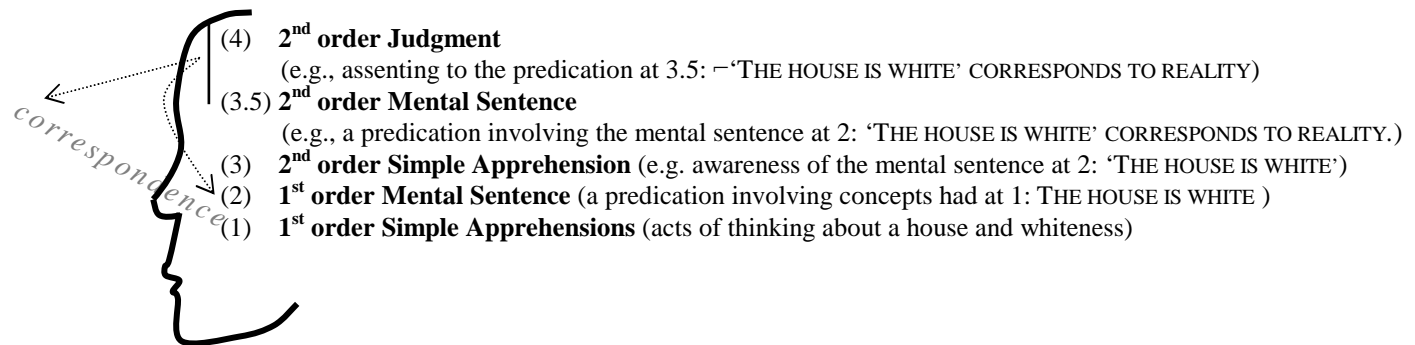
Figure 3: Wodeham’s emendation to Scotus and Ockham’s account



This brings us to the third and final step in Wodeham’s argument. For, once this further act is incorporated into the anti-realist account, Wodeham thinks it is easy to see why the object of a judgment can’t merely be a first-order mental sentence (and, hence, something entirely mind dependent as the anti-realist assumes). To see this, simply recall Wodeham’s rule. According to Wodeham rule, whatever the object of the assent is, it must be the same as the object of the apprehension that immediately precedes and causes it. Thus, in order to identify the object of a judgment, one need only consider the object of the act that precedes it. On the emended account, however, the act that precedes the judgment isn’t a simple act or awareness directed at a mental sentence. Rather the act that precedes judgment, on the emended account, is an act of apprehending or thinking that the prior mental sentence (namely, that formed at stage 2) *is true* and, hence, that it *corresponds to reality*. But clearly, the object of *this* apprehension (assuming it is true) is not going to be merely the prior mental sentence by itself, but rather an extra mental situation—albeit, one that involves the mental proposition as a constituent—namely, *the fact of*

that sentence's corresponding to reality.⁴⁷ And, given Wodeham's rule, the object of the judgment is, therefore, not the mental sentence itself but its correspondence to reality—*its being true*. We can, once again, represent Wodeham's point in diagram form:

Figure 4: Results of Wodeham's emendation plus application of Wodeham's Rule



Wodeham himself expresses all this by pointing out that, if the account of judgment is emended, the judgment will arise

in such a way that if, a [second-order] mental sentence is formed (on the basis of that prior [apprehension of the sentence])—say, for example, this: ‘THE MENTAL SENTENCE CORRESPONDS TO REALITY’—then, in that case, given that the assent in question has for its object the *total object* of that propositional apprehension by means of which it is caused (after all, why would it have more one part than another?), one would immediately apprehend through that assent that something *is such-and-such* in reality [namely, that the sentence corresponds to reality].⁴⁸

Thus, by applying Wodeham's Rule, in the third step of his argument Wodeham is able to demonstrate that, even if we were to concede the anti-realist's assumption that judgment is a kind of second-order mental state, an act of judgment still cannot plausibly be said to have as its *total* object a first-order mental state, i.e., a mental sentence.

⁴⁷ Indeed, the prior mental sentence itself could no more be the total object of the judgment than a house or whiteness could be the total object of the act of judging THE HOUSE IS WHITE. Of course, if the judgment is false there is no fact to which it corresponds, and hence no (total) object for the judgment in question.

⁴⁸ “...ita quod si ex illa prius formetur complexum, puta istud ‘ista propositio est conformis rei’, et assensus habet pro obiecto obiectum totale complexae apprehensionis mediante qua causatur—quia quare magis unam partem quam aliam?— igitur immediate per assensum apprehenditur sic esse a parte rei.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 189).

What all of this shows, of course, is that the anti-realist has failed to provide a genuinely mind-dependent entity to serve as the object of judgment—or at least to do so without presupposing an inadequate account of the psychology of judgment formation. For even supposing that all acts of belief and judgment are second-order mental acts, it still turns out that the objects for such acts cannot be merely other, first-order acts, but are rather states of affairs or facts involving such first-order acts—for example, the fact of their *corresponding to reality*. And though such states of affair include mental sentences as constituents, they are not themselves entirely mind-dependent entities.⁴⁹ Thus, as it turns out, a mental sentence can, at most, only be a *partial* object of a judgment, that is, it can at most be a *constituent* of the (mind-independent) fact that is the judgment’s *total* object. As Wodeham insists,

no mental sentence is the total object of any possible assent whatsoever. For every possible assent whatsoever corresponds in object to the mental sentence by which it is caused, so that the total of object of the mental sentence is the total object of the assent. But no mental sentence is the total object of any mental sentence. Therefore, neither is it the total object of any assent.⁵⁰

II.3 Implications of Wodeham’s critique of Anti-Realism. Before turning to Wodeham’s discussion of Aristotelian realism, it’s worth pausing briefly to consider what Wodeham’s rejection of Aristotelian anti-realism reveals about his own views. First of all, note that it’s clear from his discussion that he is committed to some form of *realism* about objects of judgment. Indeed, as his remarks about introspection make clear, Wodeham thinks that most judgments

⁴⁹ Whether or not a given mental proposition corresponds to reality does not itself depend on any activity of the mind—or at least, none beyond the activity required to preserve the existence of the mental proposition itself.

⁵⁰ “Quinta conclusio est quod nulla propositio est obiectum totale cuiuscumque assensus possibilis, quia quilibet assensus possibilis est conformis in obiecto alicui complexo quo mediante causatur, ita quod obiectum totale istius complexi est obiectum assensus. Sed nulla propositio est obiectum totale cuiuscumque propositionis, igitur nec cuiuscumque assensus.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 192). Wodeham does allow, however, “a mental sentence is certainly a partial object of some reflexive assent (but of an assent which it does not necessitate). It is, for example, [the object] of an assent by which one assents that the mental sentence is true, or that it corresponds to the signified thing’s being such and such, and other assents of this sort. For whatever is apprehended by the mental sentence that necessitates one to some assent is the partial object of that assent, as is clear from what’s been said. And, since the first mental sentence is apprehended through the mental sentence that necessitates the assent by which one assents that that mental sentence is true, therefore [that first mental sentence is a partial object of the reflexive assent].” *Ibid.*, 192.

are non-reflexive mental states—and so don't even have mental entities as partial objects.

Second, Wodeham's criticisms of anti-realism reveal that he takes the extramental entities that serve as judicative objects to stand in a broadly *referential* relation to the judgments corresponding to them. This feature of his account emerges most clearly from his second objection to anti-realism—in particular, from the distinction he draws in the course of that discussion between the representational content of a given judgment, on the one hand, and its object, on the other. If Wodeham does not conceive of the *object* of a judgment as its representational content, it's natural to suppose that the relation between a judgment and its object is one more akin to reference. Thus, it would seem that, for Wodeham, the object of judgment is just that entity to which the refers—at least when the judgment in question is *true*. The added qualification here is crucial, for as Wodeham's discussion of the second objection also makes clear, he is operating with something like a correspondence theory of truth (as we've seen, he equates a judgment's "corresponding to reality" with its "being true") and so identifies objects of judgment with the extra-mental *relata* of the relevant correspondence relations. On his view, therefore, the object of a judgment is an entity to which a true judgment corresponds; it is, in other words, the extramental grounds or truthmaker for the judgment.⁵¹

Of course, this raises a question about the object of false judgments. As I read Wodeham, false judgments do not—*taken as a whole*—have objects; that

⁵¹ Thus, objects of judgment as Wodeham conceives of them are not truth-bearers, but truthmakers. Indeed, at one point in his discussion Wodeham explicitly states that the entities that serve as objects are not *truth-bearers*. He makes this point toward the very end of his discussion when he returns to an objection the Aristotelian anti-realist brings against the view that objects of judgment are extramental. The anti-realist objection runs as follows:

1. "What's believed or known by means of an Aristotelian demonstration is true"
2. "The true and false are not found in things (*res*), but in the mind" (See, *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 181)).
3. Therefore, "the object of an act of knowledge is not found in external things, but in the mind."

Wodeham responds to this argument by denying the first premise. Thus, he argues that what's believed or known, viz. something's being such and such, is not true. As he explains: "*Something's being such-and-such* (as the conclusion [of a demonstration] signifies) is true [only] by extrinsic denomination—by means of [its connection to] an act of the soul [namely, to the mental sentence, which is the conclusion of the demonstration and which signifies it]. But the conclusion itself is what's true formally, and the conclusion is not [identical with] *something's being such-and-such* in reality (as that conclusion signifies)." *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 208).

is to say, taken as a whole, they do not refer to or designate anything. This is, presumably, just what it is for them to be false (namely, to lack a truthmaker). Indeed, this view seems to be *entailed* by his view that the objects of judgment are truthmakers—that is, the entities that ground or explain their truth. There may, of course, be *partial* objects for false judgments—there may, after all, be entities corresponding to their subject and/or predicate terms—but there is nothing corresponding to the judgment taken as a whole.

In this respect, my interpretation differs from that suggested by other commentators who, while sharing the view that *complexe significabilia* are fact-like, also maintain that there are *complexe significabilia* corresponding to false judgments.⁵² For according to these commentators Wodeham admits the existence of non-obtaining states of affairs. As I see it, however, there is insufficient evidence for such an interpretation. Admittedly, Wodeham does allow that there are *complexe significabilia* corresponding to *true* negative judgments (e.g., GABRIEL DOES NOT EXIST, MAN IS NOT AN ASS).⁵³ But this is not tantamount to admitting non-obtaining states of affair; it is only the admission of obtaining *negative* states of affairs—i.e. negative facts. It may be, however, that commentators have been led to the conclusion that Wodeham is committed to non-obtaining states of affair as a result of the kinds of linguistic considerations he advances for the introduction of *complexe significabilia*—considerations which may seem to count in favor of the introduction of a *complexe significabile* whether the judgment in question is true or false. It's important to see, however, that nothing in Wodeham's arguments from the syntactic structure of judgment (in particular, his comments about the semantic contribution of the copula) entail the introduction of *complexe significabilia* corresponding to false judgments. After all, what Wodeham says is that the copula signifies or refers to “the inherence or composition or the unity or identity [that exists] *in reality* between the terms of the sentence (or, rather, the things signified by those terms)”.⁵⁴ It's natural to suppose, therefore, that in cases in which no such “inherence”, “composition”, “unity or identity” obtains

⁵² See Gaskin, “*Complexe Significabilia* and Aristotle's Categories,” and Perler, “Late Medieval Ontologies of Facts,” who, while occasionally characterizing *complexe significabilia* as “facts” or “truthmakers”, nevertheless, seem to think that there are *complexe significabilia* corresponding to false judgments.

⁵³ See, *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 194).

⁵⁴ *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 185).

“*in reality*” the copula simply does not refer.⁵⁵ As I see it, therefore, if Wodeham’s argument does not *entail* the existence of non-obtaining states of affairs, and if there is likewise no positive indication that he intends to admit the existence of such entities, there is no reason to attribute to him a commitment to such entities.

That Wodeham takes the objects of judgment to be truthmakers is significant—and for two reasons. First, it is significant because it is, in the end, this conception of objects of judgment that lies at the heart of his disagreement with the Aristotelian anti-realists (and, as we shall see, with the standard Aristotelian realists as well). Indeed, as is by now clear, it is Wodeham’s conception of judicative objects as referents and truthmakers that makes anti-realism seem so utterly implausible to him. After all, most judgments are not directed toward our own internal mental states, but refer rather to how things stand in extramental reality. What is more, mental entities—that is, entities such as mental sentences—cannot function as truthmakers for judgments about extra-mental reality. Nor indeed can they function—at least by themselves—as truthmakers for second-order, or reflexive judgments about our own mental acts or states. For, as we’ve seen, the object and truthmaker in such cases is not the mental sentence itself, but some concrete state of affairs involving it. In the end, therefore, mental sentences—mental entities of any sort for that matter—are *by their very nature* incapable of functioning in the role Wodeham assigns to entities that serve as objects of judgment. As we shall see, moreover, the same issue is at stake in Wodeham’s disagreement with the standard Aristotelian realist—namely, whether individual things (*res*)—substances and accidents—can function as truthmakers and, hence, as objects of judgment.

The second thing that is significant about Wodeham’s commitment to treating objects of judgment as referents and truthmakers (rather than as representational contents or truth-bearers) is that it makes clear that in introducing *complexe significabilia* to serve as objects of judgment he is not introducing any sort of abstract or intentional entity. Indeed, insofar as the entities which serve as objects of judgment must function as both the worldly referent and ontological ground for judgments—indeed, in some cases, for Aristotelian *scientia*—about the nature of the extramental world, abstract or

⁵⁵ Of course, given that Wodeham recognizes a distinction between a judgment’s representational content and its referent or object, he can allow that, in the case of false judgments, the copula makes a contribution to the representational content—i.e. the cognitive significance—of the judgment in question.

intentional objects are ill-suited to serve the theoretical or explanatory role Wodeham associates with ‘objects’ in his broader theory of judgment.

III.

Given what we’ve now seen both of Wodeham’s account of the linguistic structure of judgment and of his critique of anti-realism, it should be clear that he takes the objects of judgment to be not only something extramental, but also something fact-like. As he repeatedly insists, what a judgment relates (or, as he puts it, “signifies”) is *something’s being such-and-such* in reality (*sic esse in re*). As Wodeham realizes, however, it is this latter claim that proponents of standard Aristotelian realism will deny. Indeed, as Wodeham himself goes on to point out, the standard Aristotelian realist is likely to respond to any such a claim by simply insisting that

Whatever you, [Wodeham], will have posited as the total object [of a judgment], that thing is either something or nothing. If it is nothing, it follows that nothing is the object of an act of assent. And that is certainly false. But if it is something, it is either God or a creature. And regardless of whether it is the one or the other, it is a substance or an accident. And all such things can be signified by the subject of a sentence.⁵⁶

As the realist sees it, there just isn’t anything other than substances or accidents to serve as objects of judgment. So whatever Wodeham introduces to serve as object of judgment, if it is anything at all, it must be a substance or accident (and, thus, is such that it can be signified by a simple, subject expression as well as a complex, sentential one). After all, as the realist insists, everything that exists is “either God or a creature, and regardless of whether it is one or the other, it is a substance or an accident”.

Taken by itself, however, the realist’s response looks question-begging. It’s one thing to *say* that reality is exhausted by substances and accidents, and hence that if the objects of judgment are something, they must be substances or accidents; it’s quite another *to show* that substances and accidents can actually serve as objects of judgment. As it turns out, the realist thinks he can do this as well. Indeed, the realist goes on to offer a two-fold argument aimed at establishing just this conclusion.

⁵⁶ “Quidquid tu posueris eius obiectum totale, illud aut est aliquid aut nihil. Si nihil, igitur nihil est obiectum actus assentiendi. Certum est quod falsum est. Si aliquid: vel Deus vel creatura. Et sive sic sive sic. Igitur est substantia vel accidens. Et omne tale potest significari per subiectum alicuius propositionis.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 193).

The argument begins with an attempt to discharge the linguistic evidence Wodeham offers in support of the existence of *complexe significabilia*. The realist argues that, despite differences in syntactic and semantic structure, complex expressions (such as the sentences used to express judgments) and simple expressions (such as the subject and predicate terms of such sentences) can both refer to the same type of entity—namely, individual substances and accidents. Accordingly, there is no need to postulate a *sui-generis* entity to function as the unique or distinctive referent for judgments, or sentences. As the realist (or, rather, Wodeham, arguing on behalf of the realist) explains:

As you, [Wodeham] say, whatever can be the total object of a mental sentence can be the object of assent or dissent. But a simple thing is such [that it can be the total object of a mental sentence]. Therefore, [it can be the total object of an act of assent or dissent as well]. Proof of the minor [i.e. the claim that a simple thing can be the object of a mental sentence]: it seems that anything—however simple—can be signified both by a complex expression (*complexe*) and by a simple expression (*incomplexe*). Therefore, it needn't be the case that there is a difference in what is signified [by each], rather there need be a difference only in the mode of signifying.⁵⁷

In this way, the realist counters Wodeham's contention that the best explanation for the difference between simple, subject/predicate expressions and the complex expressions formed by joining them with a copula is a difference in the ontological type of object referred to by each. For according to the realist, there is another, equally plausible explanation: the difference in the syntactic structure of such expressions could be merely a function of a difference in the way the two types of expression represent or "signify" one and the same type of object. Thus, the complex syntactic and semantic structure of the sentences used to express judgments needn't entail a corresponding complexity in the object of such judgments. Quite the contrary: according to the realist, the entity that serves as the *total* object of a judgment is such that it "can be also signified just by the subject term of a sentence" expressing that judgment.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ "Quidquid potest esse obiectum totale propositionis, potest esse obiectum assensus vel dissensus, per te. Sed simplex res est huiusmodi, igitur. Probatio minoris: quia quaelibet res, quantumcumque simplex, videtur posse significari complexe et incomplexe. Igitur non oportet quod sit ibi differentia in significato sed in modo significandi tantum." *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 193). A more literal translation would render 'complexe' and 'incomplexe' adverbially rather than adjectivally (as my translation does). The point of the argument emerges more clearly, I think, from this, less literal, translation.

⁵⁸ This is the position held, for example, by Walter Chatton, whose views are well known to Wodeham. See, Walter Chatton, *Reportatio et Lectura Super Sententias: Collatio ad librum*

The realist then goes on to argue that not only is there no need to postulate complex, fact-like entities to serve as the unique referent for judgments, there is also no need to appeal to such entities to explain the truth of such judgments. As a way of defending this claim, Wodeham imagines the realist offering the following sort of argument:

Leaving aside every imaginable thing and positing only God, GOD IS GOD [is true]. Therefore, *God's being God* is nothing other than God. Accordingly, there are those (namely, Chatton and Reading in his *Quodlibet* V—in the course of undertaking and proving his third conclusion) who suppose that God [alone] is the significatum of the mental sentence (though not the uttered one).⁵⁹

Although highly condensed, the argument here is fairly straightforward. The realist (here Wodeham names his contemporaries Walter Chatton (d. 1344) and John of Reading (d. 1346)) asks us to consider a world that contains God and only God.⁶⁰ Now, at such a world, the judgment or mental sentence GOD IS GOD will be true.⁶¹ If the judgment is true, however, there must be something corresponding to the judgment—that is, something to which the judgment

Primum et Prologus (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1989), where he argues that “the external thing [which serves as object of judgment] is cognized through the subject and the predicate and through the copula since those terms of [the mental sentence] are cognitions of an external thing. Therefore, throughout the whole time in which the mental sentence signifying the external thing is formed in the mind, the external thing is cognized—sometimes by the subject of the sentence, sometimes by the copula, sometimes by the predicate” (Prologue, q. 1, a.1, 24). In general, however, we may think of the realist as merely claiming that the object of judgment *can* be the referent of the subject term of a sentence that expresses the judgment in question. It needn't be the case, however, that the object of the judgment is the referent of the subject term of *every* sentence expressing that judgment. After all, there may be a number of sentences that express the content of a given judgment—sentences which have different subject terms.

⁵⁹ “Circumscripta omni re imaginabili, posito solo Deo, Deus est Deus, igitur Deum esse Deum non est nisi Deus. Et ideo concedunt isti quod Deus est significatum illius propositionis mentalis licet non vocalis, scilicet Chatton et Reading, *Quolibet* suo, quaestione 5, tractando et probando conclusionem suam tertiam.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 196).

⁶⁰ Medieval thinkers typically suppose that God might not have created and so are willing to allow for a possible world containing only God.

⁶¹ One might wonder how, if only God exists at such a world, there comes to be such a judgment or sentence. Though answering such a question is not central to Wodeham's point, there are, nevertheless, two ways we can think of the scenario: we could assume that the judgment is God's or produced by God; or we could simply appeal to the distinction between truth *in* a world *W* (which requires the existence of the judgment or sentence in question in *W*) and truth *at* a world (which does not). In this latter case, we are simply evaluating the truth of a given sentence (say, one existing in the actual world) with respect to a world in which only God exists.

refers and in virtue of which it is true. Perhaps as a kind of concession to Wodeham, the realist is willing to call whatever it is that serves as the object and truthmaker of this judgment ‘*God’s being God*’. But since, *ex hypothesi*, only God exists at the world in question, it must be God alone that serves as the worldly referent and truthmaker for this judgment or mental sentence. Hence, the realist concludes: “God’s being God”—that is, the entity that serves as truthmaker and, therefore, object for the judgment GOD IS GOD—“is nothing other than God”.

The realist’s example is, of course, well chosen. For in this particular case—that is, in the case of a judgment about God (a perfectly simple being) and about self-identity—it is in fact quite plausible to suppose that the judgment’s truthmaker is an individual substance—namely, God. But can this conclusion be generalized? If the Aristotelian realist is to succeed, he will need to show that, in general, it’s plausible to suppose that individual substances (and/or accidents) are, by themselves, sufficient to explain the truth of judgments and sentences pertaining to them.

The foregoing passage does, in fact, provide a basis for the more general claim. Indeed, the argument contained in it rests on the perfectly general principle about the nature of truthmaking—one that applies equally to any judgment or sentence. The principle (call it TM for “truthmaker”) is just this:

(TM) If the existence of an entity E necessitates the truth of a given judgment J, then E is the truthmaker for J.⁶²

According to TM, truthmaking is simply a matter of necessitation. Thus, what the realist seems to be supposing is that—in *general*—the truthmaker for *any* sentence or *any* judgment just is that entity whose existence is sufficient for its truth. And this principle is not without plausibility—at least in the case of certain judgments. As we have seen, it is perfectly plausible to suppose that God himself is the truthmaker for the judgment GOD IS GOD and presumably something similar could be said about identity judgments in general. What is more, among contemporary philosophers, TM—or some version of it—is often

⁶² Given that there may be some cases in which more than one entity is required for the truth of a given predication, we can allow that a truthmaker may be an entity or *entities*. It should be noted, moreover, that despite any connotation suggested by its name (*viz.* *truthmaker*), the necessitation in question is not causal but is rather broadly logical. Indeed, contemporary philosophers habitually speak of truthmakers as *entailing* the truth of certain statements or predications. See, e.g., David Armstrong, *Truth and Truthmakers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5-7; John Bigelow, *The Reality of Numbers: A Physicalist’s Philosophy of Mathematics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 125.

regarded as a plausible analysis of truthmaking, at least for contingent truths.⁶³ Hence, given TM, the Aristotelian realist has both a *prima facie* plausible, as well as a perfectly general, defense of the view that individual *things* (that is, individual substances and accidents) function by themselves as the truthmakers for—and, hence, total objects of—judicative attitudes.⁶⁴

Now if the Aristotelian realist is right about all this—that is, if individual substances and accidents are indeed adequate to function as both the total referent and truthmaker for judgment—then they would seem to be in a good position to resist the introduction of *complexe significabilia* (for reasons of theoretical parsimony, if not others). Even so, the realists do not succeed. For, as Wodeham’s response will show, their argument comes up short on both counts. It fails to establish that individual things (*res*) are sufficient to function as the truthmaker for judicative attitudes and that such things can serve as their total referent. Let us begin, however, by focusing on his criticism of the Aristotelian realist’s account of truthmaking.

III.1 Against Things as Truthmakers for Judgment. Wodeham’s strategy for responding to the Aristotelian realist’s account of *things* as truthmakers has two parts. He begins by arguing that the notion of truthmaking on which the account rests, namely, TM, is implausible. He then proceeds to show that, even setting aside considerations of its independent plausibility, granting TM creates internal difficulties for the realist’s overall account of objects of judgment. The bulk of his argument for both claims is contained in the following passage, which is worth quoting at length.

Leaving aside [consideration of] any specific time and positing [the existence of] an angel, [it will be true that] the angel is created or conserved. But the *angel’s being created* (or *being conserved*) is not [identical to] the angel. And, neither is an *angel’s existing* [identical to] an angel since, if it were, an angel’s not existing would include an outright contradiction. And yet, provided we posit only an angel, [it will be true that] an angel exists.

I say, therefore, that it is one thing to ask “what is that thing which when posited, [makes it true that] God is God or [that] an angel exists?” and yet another thing to ask “what is *God’s being God* and an *angel existing*?” With respect to the first question, one must

⁶³ E.g., David Armstrong, *A World of States of Affairs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) and *Truth and Truthmakers*; c.f. also the discussion in Bigelow, *The Reality of Numbers*.

⁶⁴ Although all the examples the realist considers are cases in which substance serves as object and truthmaker, it is consistent with his ontology to allow for cases in which an accident serves as truthmaker.

respond “God”, or “an angel”. But to the second we should not reply in this way. Rather we should reply with another expression (*dictum*)—one composed on the basis of a description of the prior [expression]. Thus, although God is such that when he alone is posited by that very fact [it is true that] God is God, and although an angel is such that when it alone is posited [it is true that] an angel exists, nevertheless, God is not [identical to] *God’s being God*, and an angel is not [identical to] an *angel’s existing*. Indeed, God is no more [identical to] *God’s being God* than an angel is [identical to] an *angel’s existing* or to *an angel’s existing and God’s existing*. ... Or again, just as God is such that when he alone is posited [it is true that] God is God, so also God is that which when he alone is posited, an angel does not exist. Therefore, [according to the realist’s theory,] God would be an *angel’s not existing*.⁶⁵

There is great deal going on in this passage, but let us begin with just its first couple of sentences. Here Wodeham appears to be taking issue with the realist’s analysis of truthmaking in terms of sufficiency. His challenge takes the form of a counterexample to TM:

Leaving aside [consideration of] any specific time and positing an angel, [it will be true that] the angel is created or conserved. But the *angel’s being created* (or *being conserved*) is not [identical to] the angel.

Wodeham’s argument is obviously intended to mirror the realist’s own—though his example involves not God, but an angel (call him ‘Gabriel’). In effect, Wodeham asks us to consider all the possible worlds in which Gabriel exists. Now clearly with respect to all such worlds it will be true that Gabriel is created (or conserved), since he is essentially a creature.⁶⁶ Hence, the mere postulation of Gabriel himself is by itself sufficient for the truth of the

⁶⁵ “...circumscripto omni tempore et posito angelo, angelus creatur vel conservatur, et tamen angelus non est angelum creari aut conservari nec angelus est angelum esse, quia tunc angelum non esse includeret repugnantiam aperte, et tamen solo angelo posito angelus est. Dico igitur quod aliud [est] quaerere quid est illud quo posito Deus est Deus vel angelus est [angelus], et quaerere quid est Deum esse Deum aut angelum esse [angelum], quia ad primam respondendum est quod ‘Deus’ vel ‘angelus’; ad secundam non sic, sed respondendum est per unum aliud dictum, compositum ex descriptione prioris. Et praeterea, licet Deus sit illud quo posito eo ipso Deus est Deus, et angelus quo posito angelus est [angelus], tamen Deus non est Deum esse Deum’ quam angelus ‘angelum esse [angelum] vel quam angelum esse et Deum esse. ... Item, sicut Deus est quo solo posito Deus est Deus, ita Deus est quo solo posito angelus non est; igitur Deus esset angelum non esse.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 196-97).

⁶⁶ This is because Wodeham assumes that Gabriel is by nature a creature. Whether he’s created or conserved will depend on which moment of his existence we are focusing on: at the first moment of his existence he is created, whereas at all subsequent moments he is conserved. Evidently, Wodeham himself is not concerned with which moment we focus on as his remark about “leaving out [of consideration] any specific time” makes clear.

judgment GABRIEL IS CREATED (or GABRIEL IS CONSERVED). But, then, given the realist's account of truthmaking, it follows that Gabriel is the truthmaker for this judgment and, therefore, that *Gabriel's being created* (which, as we've seen, is just a neutral way of referring to whatever it is that serves as truthmaker for the judgment) is nothing other than Gabriel himself. But this seems obviously false. It is not at all plausible to suppose that Gabriel alone is the truthmaker for 'Gabriel is created' (or for 'Gabriel is conserved'). After all, *Gabriel's being created* is a relational fact involving at least two individuals—as is clear from the fact that 'Gabriel is created' is elliptical for 'Gabriel is created *by God*'. Thus, even if it is true that Gabriel's existence is by itself sufficient for the truth of 'Gabriel is created by God', Gabriel is not what makes the sentence true—he is not what explains its truth.⁶⁷ (Indeed, what seems much more relevant to the explanation of its truth is God's existence, and God's activity of creating (or conserving).)

Now, even if Wodeham's first objection to Aristotelian realist's account of truthmakers were decisive, his argument does not end here. On the contrary, he proceeds to show that, if we grant the truth of TM, Aristotelian realism faces internal difficulties—indeed apparent contradiction. Wodeham offers a number of examples to illustrate this point, but since the first follows immediately upon the objection we've just been considering (regarding the angel's being created or conserved), we might as well start with it. Here again is what Wodeham says:

Nor is an angel [identical to] *an angel's existing*, since then [the judgment that] an angel doesn't exist would involve an outright contradiction. And yet, provided we posit only an angel, [it will be true that] an angel exists.

The argument is highly compressed, but we can begin to make sense of it by observing that Wodeham is presupposing a case in which someone judges that an angel—Michael, say—exists. Now, for the sake of argument, let us grant that the realist's acceptance of TM is unobjectionable. In that case, it will follow that, since Michael's existence alone is sufficient for the truth of this judgment, Michael is the judgment's truthmaker and, hence, also its total object. But now comes the trouble. For if the total object of the judgment MICHAEL EXISTS is just Michael, it follows that the expressions 'Michael' and

⁶⁷ It's significant that Wodeham's example not only provides a counterexample to TM, but also provides one that shows its falsity even in the case of contingent truths. As I noted above (see n. 64), contemporary philosophers often find TM plausible, at least when restricted to contingent truths. But Wodeham's example suggests that even this sort of restriction is problematic.

‘Michael exists’ refer to one and the same thing—namely, *Michael* (since, after all, the total object of a judgment is likewise its total referent or “significate”). Now, while the Aristotelian realist will be happy to accept this result—since, as we’ve seen, he explicitly allows that the total significate of a sentence is such that it “can also be signified by its subject term”—Wodeham argues that, in fact, it runs him into “an outright contradiction” in the case of the assertion or judgment MICHAEL DOES NOT EXIST. For the subject term of this negative existential would have to refer to an *existing Michael*!

A bit further on in the passage Wodeham goes on to provide additional examples intended to make the same point—that is, to show that a judgment’s total object and significate cannot simply be identified with that entity whose existence necessitates its truth. This is, for example, the upshot of Wodeham’s remarks toward the end of the passage where he says:

God is no more [identical to] *God’s being God* than an angel is [identical to] an *angel’s existing* or to an *angel’s existing* and *God’s existing*. ... Likewise, just as God is such that when he alone posited [it is true that] God is God, so also God is such that when he alone is posited, the angel does not exist. [Thus, on the realist’s theory,] God would, therefore, be the *angel’s not existing*.

The point Wodeham seems to be driving at is this: if the object and total significate for a given judgment is, as the realist supposes, just that entity whose existence is by itself sufficient for its truth, then certain absurd results follow. The realist will be committed to saying, for example, that the judgment GOD EXISTS has the angel Michael as its object—or, similarly, that MICHAEL DOES NOT EXIST has God as its object. To see why the realist is committed to this we need only note that just as the existence of Michael is sufficient for the truth of ‘Michael exists’, it is also sufficient for the truth of ‘God exists’ (after all, Michael’s existence entails, as we’ve seen, that Michael was created by God which, in turn entails that God exists).⁶⁸ Given this, however, the realist is committed to the view that Michael is not only the object and truthmaker for the judgment MICHAEL EXISTS, but also for the judgment GOD EXISTS.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Obviously, there are substantial theological assumptions lurking in the background of Wodeham’s argument here, but it’s worth noting that (a) these are not assumptions at which his opponent would balk and (b) the point he’s making is perfectly general (and can be made without appeal to any theological assumptions). Indeed, all Wodeham is calling attention to is the implausibility of saying that *whatever* necessitates or entails the truth of a given judgment is its object or referent. After all, if this were the case, then it would turn out that (to take a non-theological example) anything whatsoever is the object for the judgment that $2+2=4$ (since this is a necessary truth and the existence of anything entails or necessitates its being true).

⁶⁹ Wodeham himself expresses this point by saying that, on the realist’s account, the angel will

Likewise, Wodeham goes on to argue, in any world in which God and *only* God exists, it will be true *at that world* that Michael does not exist.⁷⁰ Hence, according to the realist, “God would, therefore, be the *angel’s not existing*”—that is to say, God would be the truthmaker and object of the judgment MICHAEL DOES NOT EXIST. But these results look absurd: Michael is obviously *not* the object of the belief or judgment that God exists, nor does God seem to be the object of the belief that Michael does not exist.

What all of this shows, is that even if we grant that an individual substance (or perhaps even a given accident) is sufficient for the truth of some judgment, this does not warrant the realist’s claim that such an entity is also serves its object. Indeed, what Wodeham’s response as a whole is designed to show is the importance of *distinguishing between* the entity that necessitates the truth of a given judgment and what serves as its object or truthmaker. As Wodeham himself puts it:

it is one thing to ask “what is that thing which when posited, [makes it true that] God is God or [that] an angel exists?” and yet another thing to ask “what is *God’s being God* and an *angel existing*?” With respect to the first question, one must respond “God”, or “an angel”. But to the second we should not reply in this way.

Thus, the central problem with the realist’s strategy, as Wodeham sees it, is that it assumes that one can answer questions about what it is in extramental reality that corresponds to a given judgment by merely identifying entities that are sufficient to secure its truth. Indeed, insofar as this assumption is demonstrably false, the realist has not succeeded in establishing that substances and accidents are, by themselves, adequate to function as the truthmakers and, hence, *total objects* for judgment.

III.2 Against Things as Referents of Judgment. Lest the foregoing objections leave the impression that Wodeham’s entire case against Aristotelian realism rests on the question of truthmaking we should not forget that, from Wodeham’s point of view, the most direct evidence for the existence of facts or *complexe significabilia* comes from reflection on the semantic and syntactic

turn out to be identical with both “the angel’s existing and God’s existing”.

⁷⁰ This example is a bit more puzzling, but I take it that Wodeham’s idea is that God’s existence at any world in which *he alone* exists is sufficient for its being true (at that world) that Michael does not exist. Perhaps we could supplement the example by saying that it’s God’s existence together with certain of his volitions (say, to not create Michael) that is sufficient for this truth. Even so, Wodeham’s argument seems less persuasive in this case given the difficulty of determining the referent (and so object) of negative existentials.

structure of judgments (and of the sentences that correspond to them). As he insists once again:

We should say that the total object of a [judgment and] mental sentence is its significate. But its significate is either something's *being such and such* or *not being such and such* (according as the sentence in question denotes). ... And while every entity of this sort can be signified, it cannot be signified by any simple mental act (that is, not by a simple understanding); therefore, it can be signified by means of a composed or divided sign—that is, by means of an affirmative or negative sentence.⁷¹

As this passage makes clear, Wodeham maintains that it is simply implausible to suppose a complete sentence or judgment and one (or more) of its constituent terms refers to one and the same thing. This is because, as we've already seen, Wodeham thinks the copula (the “mark of composition” as he calls it) makes a distinct contribution to the semantic value (*viz.* the significate) of the sentence—it introduces something not indicated by either the subject or predicate expressions.

It is to this point about the semantic contribution of the copula that Wodeham specifically returns when responding to the first part of the realist's argument—namely, to his claim that “anything—however simple—can be signified both by a complex expression (*complexe*) and by simple expression (*incomplexe*)”, and, therefore that there need not be “a difference in what is signified [by the two types of expression], rather there need be a difference only in the mode of signifying”. In response, Wodeham has the following to say:

it is true that any given *thing* [i.e. substance or accident] can be signified (*est significabile*) in both ways, [that is, either by a complex expression or by a simple expression]. Nevertheless, I claim that it cannot be signified by a complex sign that is wholly fitted (*adequato*) to it. This is because the sign (*nota*) of composition (or any other sign equivalent in its mode of signifying) belonging to any complex sign consignifies at very least a present, past, or future time—which time is not co-signified in this way by any simple (*incomplexe*) expression that signifies the thing at least mentally if not vocally.⁷²

⁷¹ “...dicendum quod obiectum totale propositionis est eius significatum. Eius autem significatum est sic esse vel sic non esse sicut per propositionem denotatur. ...Et omne huiusmodi est significabile, et non per incomplexum mentale, id est non per simplicem intelligentiam, igitur per signum compositum vel divisum, id per est propositionem affirmativam vel negativam.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 193-194).

⁷² “Ad probationem: verum est quod quaelibet res est utroque [modo] significabilis. Sed dico quod non est significabilis signo sibi adaequato complexo, quia nota compositionis cuiuscumque (et omne signum aequivalens in modo significandi) consignificat tempus praesens, praeteritum vel futurum ad minus, quod non sic consignificatur per quodcumque signum significans

In this passage, Wodeham's aim is to undermine the realist's argument by calling attention to the fact that the copula designates a feature of *extramental reality* not indicated by any expression that lacks it. He does so in order to show that the difference between an expression containing a copula (or something equivalent to it) and one that does not cannot possibly be explained as merely a difference in the way one and the same extramental reality is represented. As he says, "any sign (*nota*) of composition (and any sign equivalent in its mode of signifying) co-signifies at least a present, past, or future time, which is not consigned in this way by any simple expression that signifies the thing." As Wodeham sees it, the time at which something exists (and exists as pale, or as wise, or as self-identical, say) is not merely a function of how we to represent, or think about thing—it is not merely a function of "the mode of signifying" that thing. It is rather an objective feature of the extramental realities about which we judge and speak—a feature, Wodeham emphasizes, uniquely indicated by the copula.⁷³

If this is right, the realist's attempt to discharge the linguistic evidence Wodeham offers for *complexe significabilia*—and thereby to resist the postulation of such entities—holds little promise. Indeed, according to Wodeham, the realist has made very little progress toward showing that an adequate theory of judgment can be developed from within the standard Aristotelian substance-accident framework. Insofar, the realist has failed to show how substances (and/or accidents) can serve as either the *total* referent or the truthmaker for judgment (and mental sentences) he has provided very little reason for thinking such entities can serve as their object.

IV.

In the end, therefore, it would seem that the *prima facie* linguistic evidence Wodeham offers for the existence of facts or *complexe significabilia* is what's driving his conclusion about objects of judgment. The fact that both of the standard Aristotelian alternatives are unable to offer a better, or indeed even a tenable, explanation of judgment shows, Wodeham concludes, that there is no choice but to revise the standard medieval-Aristotelian substance-accident

incomplexe tantum mentale licet non vocale." *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 196). Here again, I render the adverbial '*complexe*' and '*incomplexe*' adjectivally.

⁷³ Although Wodeham's argument here rests on what is nowadays a controversial notion of time, it is less clear that this conception would have proved controversial among his own contemporaries.

ontology so as to allow for the introduction of *complexe significabilia*—that is, for entities that are uniquely designated or “signified” by complex expressions such as sentences and judgments. As he sees it, the introduction of such entities provides not only the most natural, but as it turns out, the *only* viable explanation for the complexity in the way we represent (i.e. judge, apprehend, and speak about) the world: namely, that the world itself is so structured.

As Wodeham himself is well aware, the most pressing question for his account—at least from the perspective of the standard medieval Aristotelian—is this: “What is it that you are calling the total object of a sentence?”⁷⁴ Although Wodeham’s initial response to this question is just to reiterate that the object of judgment—say, of the judgment A MAN IS AN ANIMAL—is neither a mental sentence (*complexum*) as the anti-realist maintains, nor a simple, extramental thing (*incomplexum*) as the realist maintains, he himself recognizes that such an answer is not likely to satisfy. After all, on the standard interpretation of the Aristotelian categorial framework these two alternatives are exhaustive, and thus to anyone reasoning from within it Wodeham’s answer is not likely to prove illuminating. And so, Wodeham continues (harking back to a point made earlier in connection with standard Aristotelian realism):

But you will say: *a man’s being an animal* is either something or nothing. I say, however, that neither alternative is to be granted. It is not something, but is rather *a man’s being something*, as was said. ... But you will say: if it is not nothing, then it is something. ... Accordingly, you will say: So what is it? (*Quid igitur est?*) To which we must reply that it is *a rational animal’s being a sensing animate substance*. Or more properly, we reply that man’s being an animal is not a what (*quid*), but rather a something’s *being what*. And so the question is inept.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 195). This is, in fact, the very first “doubt” that Wodeham considers when he turns to a discussion of likely objections to his view.

⁷⁵ “Dices: hominem esse animal aut est aliquid aut nihil. Dico, quod neutrum est dandum, sed quod non est aliquid; sed [dandum] est hominem esse aliquid, ut dictum [est]. ... dices: si non est nihil, igitur est aliquid. ... Dices: quid igitur est? Respondendum [est] quod est animal rationale esse substantiam animatam sensibilem. Magis tamen proprie respondetur quod hominem esse animal non est quid, sed est esse quid.” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 195). The passage goes on: “In the same way, a question by which it is asked ‘What is man is an animal?’ would be ill-formed quibbling. For, setting aside every sentence [or thought], man is an animal in reality. [Therefore, man is an animal is not a sentence.] And we should not allow [the reply] that man is an animal is a substance, or an accident, or that it is something or that it is nothing as none of these replies would be intelligible—or even say anything. Such questions presuppose something not true.”

Because *complexe significabilia* cannot be located within the “standard” Aristotelian ontology, Wodeham thinks the line of questioning pursued by his opponent (insofar as it *presupposes* an interpretation of Aristotle which excludes such entities) is “inept”. If Wodeham allows that a *complexe significabile* is *a something (aliquid)*, or more literally, “some” (*ali-*) “what” (*quid*), this would imply that it is the sort of entity which answers to the Aristotelian question “*Quid est?*”—a question whose answer identifies the definition or essence of any given *substance* or *accident*.⁷⁶ But since, as Wodeham has now argued, no substance or accident can be the total object and significate of a judgment or sentence, he is forced to say that a *complexe significabile* “is not a something” and, therefore, that it “is not a what (*quid*)”. And yet, Wodeham insists, it is not nothing. Indeed, to infer from Wodeham’s claim that a *complexe significabile* is not *a something* (in the strict Aristotelian sense) to the conclusion that it must, therefore, be nothing simply begs the question against him, for such an inference rests on the assumption that, contrary to the evidence Wodeham has now adduced, there is nothing in extramental reality besides substances and accidents.

Commentators have tended to interpret Wodeham’s claim that a *complexe significabile* “is not a something” as an indication of some kind of hesitancy on his part to ascribe genuine ontological status to the objects and significates of judgment and sentences—at least of the sort accorded to ordinary Aristotelian substances and accidents. Indeed, in general, Wodeham’s introduction of *complexe significabilia* has not been regarded as posing any serious challenge to the standard, Aristotelian categorial framework. Instead, the general trend in the literature has been to suppose that it is only when Wodeham’s theory is adopted and developed by later thinkers such as Gregori of Rimini that *complexe significabilia* come to be seen as conflicting with the standard substance accident framework.⁷⁷ This is because, Wodeham’s *complexe significabilia* are typically treated either as sufficiently other-worldly as to mark no significant intrusion into the concrete world of Aristotelian substances and accidents, or else as ontologically derivative on substances and accidents.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ This explains why Wodeham is willing to substitute the definitions of the subject and predicate terms (viz. MAN and ANIMAL, respectively) in the judgment A MAN IS AN ANIMAL. For such terms do designate substances and so clearly admit of a definition (and hence, an answer to the ‘*quid est*’ question), but the sentence or judgment taken as a whole does not and, as a result, no Aristotelian definition may be provided for it.

⁷⁷ See for example, Zupko, “How it Played in the Rue de Fouarre”; Nuchelmans, “Adam Wodeham on the Meaning of Declarative Sentences,” 138-186. C.f. note 7 above

⁷⁸ For examples from the literature, see note 6 above. An exception to both sorts of interpretation may be found in Elizabeth Karger, “William of Ockham, Walter Chatton, and

As I indicated at the outset—and as is by now clear given what we’ve seen of Wodeham’s discussion in d.1, q.1—both sorts of interpretation miss the mark.

Commentators who advance the first of these two sorts of interpretation, infer from Wodeham’s claim that a *complexe significabile* is not a ‘thing’ or ‘a something’ that he intends to distinguish this sort of entity from *concreta*—that is, from *genuine objects* which are classified by the *Categories* and which can be named. According to such commentators, *complexe significabilia* are not named by sentences or judgments, but are merely expressed by them. Accordingly, they tend to read Wodeham as introducing some kind of non-objectual, abstract entity—meanings, say, or other type of intentional entity.⁷⁹ It should be clear enough by now, however, that any such interpretation rests on a failure to appreciate the ontological or explanatory role *complexe significabilia* are called on to play in Wodeham’s theory of judgment.⁸⁰ As we’ve noted already, Wodeham distinguishes between a judgment’s representational content and the entity that serves as its object—what is more, he also explicitly denies that *complexe significabilia* are truth-bearers.⁸¹ Given this, it is a mistake to suppose that the entities Wodeham introduces to serve as objects of judgment are intended by him to function as meanings or intentions expressed by judgments.⁸² What is more, given their role as truthmakers, as objects of Aristotelian science, and as temporal entities—that is, as entities obtaining at times indicated by the copula in expressions which refer to them—it is simply implausible to think that *complexe significabilia* are anything other than fully-fledged constituents of concrete reality—that is, of the realm of individual, concrete substances and accidents.

Not only do *complexe significabilia*, as Wodeham is conceiving of them, belong to the realm of substances and accidents, but they also constitute a significant ontological addition to them.⁸³ To think otherwise seems not only

Adam Wodeham on the Objects of Knowledge and Belief,” *Vivarium* no. 33 (1995): 171-186.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Weidemann, “Sache, Satz und Satzverhalt.”

⁸⁰ It’s worth observing that even if this interpretation were right, however, it would still follow that Wodeham’s account of objects of judgment constitutes a fairly significant departure of the standard Aristotelian substance-accident framework. After all, medieval adherents of this framework typically suppose the division between substances and accidents is exhaustive—that is, that there is nothing else, concrete or abstract.

⁸¹ See note 52 above.

⁸² Indeed, Wodeham explicitly claims that *complexe significabilia* can be named in just the way any ordinary substance and accident can. According to Wodeham, subject expressions formed from the nominalization of sentences can *supposit* for *complexe significabilia*: “homo esse animal’ potest supponere et sumi pro isto dicto propositionis ..vel pro eo quod per huiusmodi dictum significatur.” *L.sec.*, 1.1.1, 1:194. C.f. note 84 below.

⁸³ Pace, Perler, “Late Medieval Ontologies of Facts,” who insists that Wodeham does not

to ignore Wodeham's own repeated insistence on the distinction between substances, say, God, and entities such as *God's being God*, or likewise between Michael and *Michael's existing*, but also his own positive reasons for introducing *complexe significabilia* in the first place: *things* belonging to the category of substance and accident are simply not the *type* of entity suited to serve the ontological roles Wodeham ascribes to objects of judgment; hence, the need for an altogether new type or category of being.⁸⁴

That Wodeham intends *complexe significabilia* as entities distinct from and additional to individual substances and accidents is made perhaps even clearer by his own remarks on the proper interpretation of Aristotle's discussion in the *Categories*. Like other medieval philosophers, Wodeham views the categories as a classification of the fundamental types of being made on the basis of an analysis of the fundamental types of expression. Wodeham goes on to argue, however, that just as there are different types of entity corresponding to each of the different type of non-complex expressions, so also is there yet another distinct type of entity corresponding to complex expressions. As he explains:

This [conclusion, namely the introduction of *complexe significabilia*] agrees with Aristotle who, in the *Categories*, says that each [sort] of non-complex expression 'signifies a substance or a quality or a quantity' etc. But, he does not say that each and every [type of expression] signifies a substance or quantity, etc. For some signs do not signify *precisely* (*adequate*) a substance, but rather signify *something's being a substance* (and so on for the other categories); other signs signify *something's not being a substance* (and so on for the other categories). Likewise, elsewhere in the *Categories*, [Aristotle says]: "a statement [is said to be] true or false, because *a thing exists or does not exist*." But he does not say [that a statement is true] 'because a thing or non-thing.' Again, in the chapter of the *Categories* that begins "Often what is customarily opposed", he says: "For in just the way that an affirmation is opposed to its contrary negation—as, for example, 'he sits' is opposed to 'he

intend to "reify" *complexe*, and that such entities supervene on and are nothing in addition to substances and accidents on which they supervene. Merely saying that *complexe significabilia* "supervene" on substances and accidents doesn't by itself guarantee that they're nothing over and above them—there must also be evidence for thinking that Wodeham thinks what supervenes is reducible to what it supervenes on.

⁸⁴ That the introduction of such beings carries ontological commitment to a new class of beings is also signaled by Wodeham's insistence that the sentential nominalizations "supposit" for (where supposition is universally taken to involve existential import) precisely those entities *signified* by the sentence in question. For example, Wodeham thinks that the expressions 'Man's being an animal' and 'man' and 'animal' all have *supposita*, but he also is also explicit in saying that their *supposita* are distinct. See *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 194). (Karger calls attention to this same point in "William of Ockham, Walter Chatton, and Adam Wodeham on the Objects of Knowledge and Belief," 192-93.)

does not sit’—so also for the thing posited as underlying each—that is, *sitting* versus *not sitting*.”⁸⁵

According to Wodeham, what Aristotle’s various remarks in the *Categories* show is that the world Aristotle envisions is one that not only includes *complexe significabilia*, but even includes them as in some sense fundamental entities. For, as Wodeham sees it, what the *Categories* tells us is that the extramental correlate for claims about what *exists* is not any *thing* (that is, any substance, quality, quantity, etc.), but is rather an existential fact—a *thing’s existing* (where the latter is understood to be something other than or distinct from the former). What this suggests is that, on Wodeham’s view, the substances and accidents are not only distinct from, but indeed function as parts or constituents of *existential complexe significabilia* which are, in turn, the fundamental structures comprising reality.

Although Wodeham proposes a fairly radical departure from the standard interpretation of the Aristotelian substance-accident framework, it is important to note that he appeals to (and, indeed, find support in) Aristotle’s discussion in the *Categories* to support his views. Yet, whether or not Wodeham’s theory of *complexe significabilia* does in fact possess the Aristotelian credentials he claims for it, the theory does clearly run against the grain of the dominant medieval interpretation of Aristotle’s ontology. Given this, it should be clear that Wodeham’s account of objects of judgment in d.1, q.1 constitutes both a significant departure from and challenge to the substance-accident framework presupposed by his contemporaries. In fact, it appears that Wodeham is not merely arguing for the addition of one more category of being to be included alongside (or somehow dependent on) the categories of substance and accident but is rather re-conceiving the “standard” Aristotelian framework itself—re-conceiving, that is, the very building blocks of reality.⁸⁶ The world, at its most

⁸⁵ “Et hoc congruit Aristoteli, qui in Praedicamentis dicit quod singulum incomplexorum significat substantiam aut quantum aut quale etc., et non dicit quod omne singulum significat substantiam aut quantum etc. Aliquod enim signum non significat adaequate substantiam sed significat aliquid esse substantiam, et ita de aliis; et aliquod significat aliquid non esse substantiam, et ita de aliis. Item, alibi in *Praedicamentis*: ‘Eo quod res est vel non est, oratio vera vel falsa [dicitur esse],’ et non dicit ‘eo quod res vel non res’. Et iterum, isto capitulo *Praedicamentorum*, ‘Quotiens autem solet opponi’ dicit sic: ‘Sicut enim affirmatio adversum negationem opposita est, ut quod sedet ei quod non sedet, sic et res quae sub utroque posita est, id est sedere ad non sedere.’” *L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 195).

⁸⁶ Having acknowledged that Wodeham does make an important break with the standard medieval-Aristotelian tradition in introducing facts, it would be a mistake to suppose he means to offer anything like a fully developed account of facts. Still, it is worth noting that we can glean the beginnings of such an account from what he does say over the course of his

fundamental level, is not, according Wodeham, a world of *things*—that is, of substances and accidents, but of “*things being such-and-such*”—that is, a world of *complexe significabilia* or, as we would put it nowadays, a world of facts or concrete states of affair.⁸⁷

discussion in d.1, q.1. For example, unlike most contemporary philosophers who endorse a fact ontology, Wodeham doesn't attempt to restrict his ontology just to positive facts, but is willing to countenance negative facts as well. This is suggested in a number of passages we've already considered, but is perhaps most clear from his remarks in the following passage: “Just as I have said for affirmative [judgments] so I say for negative ones. The object of [the judgment] MAN IS NOT AN ASS is *man's not being an ass.*” (*L.sec.*, dist. 1, q.1 (I: 194) In addition to negative facts, Wodeham also allows for: facts of different orders (i.e. both first-order facts such as Socrates's being pale, as well as second-order facts as the fact that the sentence ‘Socrates is wise’ corresponds to the (first-order) fact of Socrates' being wise); existential facts (e.g., *Michael's existing*)—including negative existential facts (such as ‘Michael does not exist’); and, finally, relational facts (e.g., Gabriel's being created by God).

Of course, much more is required before we get anything like a complete theory. For example, although Wodeham seems to think there are negative facts, it's not at all clear what he is going to take the constituents of such facts to be—especially in the case of those negative facts that correspond to judgments about the non-existence of some individual. Likewise, Wodeham has told us nothing about the facts that make true disjunctions, conjunctions, general statements, and the like. Does he want to say there are distinct kinds of fact corresponding to each of these types of statement—or, more generally, that there are distinct kinds of fact for every distinct kind of statement? Wodeham's discussion in d.1, q.1 provides no answer to such questions, nor even any indication for how such questions should be answered. But this is not surprising. Such questions among the most difficult to decide (indeed, they are at large even in contemporary discussions of facts), and are far beyond the scope of Wodeham's project in article1. After all, his aim is not to develop or hand down a fully worked out ontology of facts, but merely to establish the need for such a theory.

⁸⁷ I'm grateful for useful comments and criticism on earlier drafts of this paper from a number of people. In particular, I would like to thank Scott MacDonald, Scott Spiker, Jason Stanley, and especially Jeff Brower.