

The Analogical Logic of Discovery and the Aristotelian Epistemic Principle: A Semantic Foundation for Divine Naming in Aquinas

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Abstract: In this paper, I focus on the important semantic components involved in analogy in hopes of providing an epistemic ground for predicating names of God analogously. To this task, I address a semantic/epistemic problem, which concludes that the doctrine of analogy lacks epistemological grounding insofar as it presupposes a prior understanding of God in order to sufficiently alter a given concept to be proportionate to God. In hopes of avoiding this conclusion, I introduce Aquinas's specifically semantic aspects that follow after the real distinction between a thing's *esse* and its essence or form in the context of analogy and show that the *ratio* of a term can be altered in a way proportionate to a consideration of the mode of being of God.

I.

The *Logic of Discovery and Analogy of Proper Proportionality*. One can consider the logic of analogy in at least two ways. The first is a "Traditional Logic of Analogy" in which one analyzes the analogical relations between a given set of concepts in a given set of propositions;¹ the second is what can be dubbed the "Analogical Logic of Discovery," to expand a phrase from Karl Popper.² In the second sense, analogy involves altering an original concept of object *x*, in order to discover or obtain a second concept that is fitting for apprehending some distinct object *y* while still maintaining

¹This is the most typical way of understanding the logic of analogy. For example, this is the main approach to analyzing the logic of analogy in Ralph McInerny's, *The Logic of Analogy: An Interpretation of St. Thomas* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971) and *Aquinas and Analogy* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996). He calls this approach "analogy of naming."

²Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (New York: Routledge, 2002). I am referring to Popper's phrase "logic of discovery."

some semantic connection or grounding in the original concept of x . The logic of analogical discovery is performative and generative in nature. In this paper, I shall focus on the second notion of analogy.³

So, assuming that terms cannot be univocally predicated of God and creatures, how would an “Analogical Logic of Discovery” explain how human beings can accurately predicate things of God? The semantic relations among terms that describe analogy can be schematized as follows: take propositions q and r with the structure “ S is P ,” and “ T is P ,” respectively, in which P is predicated analogically of T . In this case, the meaning of P in q is the original meaning of P and presupposed in the meaning of P in r . On one hand, the meaning of P is originally grounded in its union with S . On the other hand, since it is understood in conjunction with T , and T is not the same kind of thing as S with respect to P , the sense of P in relation to T is different from its sense in relation to S . In this way, P (call it P_2) in relation to T in r expresses a different concept from P (call it P_1) in relation to S in q .⁴

With this in mind, we turn to *De veritate* 2.11—an early source for what has been called Aquinas’s analogy of proportionality.⁵ With analogy of proper proportionality there is no immediately discernible relation or proportion between subjects S and T in q and r that can serve to ground the semantic relation between the two senses of P . Rather, the semantic touchstone for the meaning of P in each proposition is the discernible proportionality between P_1 regarding S and P_2 regarding T . It is a similarity of proportionality that P_1 has in relation to S and P_2 has in relation to T that serves as the *ratio propria* for establishing the meaning of P_2 . This can be seen in the example of the relation of proportionality in the following propositions: “The eye is with respect of having vision” and “The

³I am not the only one to identify this second notion of analogy; it appears in the secondary literature. For example, Gyula Klima in “Being, Unity and Identity in the Fregean and Aristotelian Traditions,” *Aristotle on Method and Metaphysics*, ed. Edward Feser (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 146–68, refers to “the process of . . . analogical concept-formation.” Also, McNerny distinguishes analogy of naming from “knowledge from or by analogy,” in McNerny, “Analogy and Discovery” in *Aquinas and Analogy*, 142. McNerny is careful to have readers not think that analogical naming is directly related to knowledge by analogy. However, essential to my argument is that the logic of naming and that of analogical discovery can be closely linked.

⁴ P_1 and P_2 share the same term but are distinct concepts.

⁵The importance of analogy of proper proportionality in the context of the analogy of being is argued for incisively by Steven A. Long in his *Analogia Entis: On the Analogy of Being, Metaphysics, and the Act of Faith* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011). As one can see from the texts that I have selected to support my argument, I agree with Long that these texts (including the text below from *Summa contra gentiles*) are key for understanding Aquinas’s mature view of analogy that is appropriate to Divine naming, and that Aquinas did not change his mind on the value of the analogy of proportionality. More on this below.

soul is with respect of having vision.”⁶ As one can see, there is no immediately discernible proportion between the eye and the soul; that is, no obvious relationship that the eye has to the soul that can be employed to establish distinct notions for the term “vision.” Rather, the relation of the distinct senses of the predicates is determined by the way in which the predicate is related to its own subject. As Aquinas explains, “sight is predicated of bodily sight and of the intellect because understanding is in the mind as sight is in the eye.”⁷

But this leaves us with some puzzlement regarding how “vision” obtains its analogous meaning—its meaning specifically in reference to the soul. To demonstrate this, let us look at another example given by Aquinas: “Six is ‘like’ four in this, that just as six is the double of three, so four is the double of two.”⁸ To interpret this example in light of analogous naming, we need to assume that two and three, although they possess different meanings, have the same term to express them. Let us call the common term for two and three *N*. Consider two propositions, “Six is in a relation to *N*,” and “Four is in a relation to *N*.” Also assume that *N* originally means “three.” As with the example given regarding “vision,” from a cognitive perspective, as they stand there is no determinate relation between six and four. However, given the original meaning of *N*—“three”—in relation to the meaning of six, we discern that there is a proportionate relationship between the two, expressed by the meaning “double.” In this way, we fill in the meaning of the first proposition to be “Six is double in relation to three.” With this in mind, we look to the other proposition to discern the new meaning of *N* in relation to four. We add to the second proposition the proportion of being double found in the first proposition in order to arrive at a different meaning for *N*. That is, the subject, “four,” is double *N*, meaning that *N* now means “two.”⁹

These two examples of proportionality indicate Aquinas’s view of how God can be accurately named analogously.¹⁰ Given the two propositions “Socrates is

⁶I apologize for the eccentric formulation of these English sentences. I have chosen this formulation to make the copula explicit. Of course, more familiar and equivalent expressions would be “The eye has vision,” and “The soul has vision,” respectively.

⁷Aquinas, *De veritate*, trans. Robert W. Mulligen, S.J. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1994), 2.11, co., 113.

⁸Ibid.

⁹For an excellent treatment of Cajetan’s discussion of the (imperfect) unity that the analogous concepts have (on my schema, between the two meanings for *N*) see Joshua Hochschild, *The Semantics of Analogy: Rereading Cajetan’s De Nominum Analogia* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), 129–30.

¹⁰George P. Klubertanz, S.J., in his *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy: A Textual Analysis and Systematic Synthesis* (Chicago, IL: Loyola University Press, 1960), 91, agrees that this application to Divine naming “is obviously an extension of mathematical proportionality.” However, I suggest that the mathematical example of proper proportionality is not identical as that which Aquinas utilizes for divine naming. Specifically, with the mathematical example, there is proportionality among

wise” and “God is wise,” what is not known is what the new meaning of “wisdom” is in relation to God; all that we know is that it has to be different from its meaning in relation to created things. We cannot appeal to any discernible relationship between Socrates and God that would be relevant to obtain a new meaning of wisdom in relation to God, since God is not really related to the created order.¹¹ Thus, it seems that knowledge of something about Socrates cannot give us any proportionate or relevant knowledge of God. However, there are two conditions by which our cognition can ascend to an understanding of God as wise. First, the original concept of wisdom can be altered to become another concept.¹² Second, on one hand, “wisdom” originally expresses a certain kind of relation or proportion to Socrates himself that can be used to understand how God is with respect to some attribute ascribed to God; while on the other hand, the attribute which is altered in order to apply to God is no longer expressive of creaturely wisdom.¹³ The attribute “wisdom” can be altered according to five known factors: the original meaning of “wisdom” in conjunction with Socrates, the meaning of “Socrates,” the proportionality that has been identified to hold between Socrates and his wisdom, the meaning of “God,” and the applicabil-

quantities whereas with divine naming it utilizes qualities. At this point, I remind the reader that here we are not looking at a traditional logic of analogy but rather an analogical logic of discovery. The feature that is common between the mathematical example and proper proportionality with Divine naming is the generative function for the meaning of the fourth term. The uniqueness of proper proportionality when applied to divine naming will become more evident later in the paper. However, Klubertanz argues that upon textual considerations proper proportionality was a doctrine taught by Aquinas for a brief period early in his career and can find no “reason for St. Thomas’ temporary adherence to proportionality,” 94–5. John Wippel, in *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 65–93, also holds that Aquinas later abandons his analogy of proportionality. I suggest both that Aquinas did not abandon proper proportionality and the reason for why he adhered to it was in order to describe the cognitive process by which one can suitably alter one’s original concept in order to be sufficiently true of God, or what I call the analogical logic of discovery.

¹¹Although the created order is really related to God as its *sine quo non* creator, this relation and proportion will not do the trick for religious naming, which proceeds from a knowledge of the created order to an understanding of God and not *vice versa*.

¹²Is this process a form of abstraction since it involves concept formation? Not really: it is more like the second or even the third act of intellection; it is like these in that it presupposes some concepts abstracted from experience.

¹³That we can predicate terms of God that need not import creaturely aspects of God even though they are derived from creatures is made possible, Aquinas argues, through the distinction between the *res significata* and the *modus significandi*. Although we signify things through the mode through which we have come to know them (through experiences of creatures), we can still signify a thing itself (*res significata*) independently from its *modus significandi*. As Aquinas argues, although our concepts are immaterial, this does not mean that when we signify a rock, we must at the same time attribute immateriality to the rock. For this distinction see McNerny, *Aquinas and Analogy*.

ity of the proportionality to “God.” With these five factors known, as with the mathematical example of proper proportionality given above, one has enough information to generate the new meaning for “wisdom” as it applies to God. As a result, when “wisdom” is predicated of God, although the notion of wisdom in relation to God had its original meaning in relation to creatures, it is altered to be commensurate with God. Therefore, although the proportion is similar, the new sense of wisdom in relation to God lacks those features that make it specifically relevant to Socrates. In light of this, Aquinas concludes that “nothing prevents some name from being predicated analogically of God and creatures according to this mode of analogy.”¹⁴

However, the doctrine of analogy in general has been the subject of many sustained criticisms, with one critic claiming that “*either* the doctrine of univocity is true *or* everything we say about God is in the most straightforward sense unintelligible.”¹⁵ Specifically, the trouble that I address in this paper is, given the fact that we cannot know anything positive about God from our original concepts of creatures, how is it possible to know how we are to alter our original concepts to create concepts fitting for apprehending God without falsely presupposing some sort of epistemic acquaintance with God? To resolve this I examine Aquinas’s two-fold analysis of semantic elements (*viz.*, modes of being and *rationes*) that follow after the real distinction between *esse* and essence. I bracket the broader question about whether there is a proper analogy of being by taking a specifically semantic approach, which is, I think, at work in this aspect of Aquinas’s view of analogy. I argue that one can avoid significant challenges to Aquinas’s analogical approach to Divine naming by paying attention to specific semantic aspects of terms. The distinct semantic elements related to existence and *ratio* allows us a proper place for proportionality in Aquinas alongside analogy of attribution and proportion. The former, I argue, provides an epistemic ground for the possibility of correctly predicating names of God analogously.

II.

The Aristotelian Epistemic Principle and the Semantic/Epistemic Problem.

A significant source of criticism of analogous naming is John Duns Scotus. Although Scotus offers arguments in favor of univocal naming between terms predicated of God and creatures, we are interested here in looking at his criticism of analogous naming found in *Ordinatio*, Book 1, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1–2. However, since Scotus does not directly address Aquinas’s view, Scotus’s criti-

¹⁴Aquinas, *De veritate*, 2.11, co.

¹⁵Thomas Williams, “The Doctrine of Univocity is True and Salutory,” *Modern Theology* 21, no. 4 (2005): 57–80.

cisms need to be extended to apply to Aquinas's position.¹⁶ But, as we shall see, the core criticism of Scotus is still quite potent against Aquinas's view, even if not decisive in the end.

An important argument can be identified in Scotus against Aquinas's position on analogous naming:

No concept of what is real is naturally produced in the intellect of the wayfarer unless by what naturally activates our intellect. But that is a phantasm or an object reflected in the phantasm, as well as the active intellect. Thus no simple concept is now naturally produced in our intellect except what can be produced by virtue of these. But a concept which would not be univocal with an object reflected in a phantasm, but rather would be altogether different from and prior to that to which it has analogy, could not be produced by virtue of the active intellect and a phantasm, as I shall prove. Thus there never will be such a different analogous concept which is posited as occurring naturally in the intellect of the wayfarer; and in this way no concept of God could ever be naturally possessed, which is false. Proof of the assumption: Any object, whether reflected in a phantasm or in an intelligible species, with the active or possible intellect acting coordinately to the limit of its forces, produces in the intellect as an effect adequate to itself its own concept and every concept essentially or virtually included in it. But that other concept, which is held to be analogous, is neither essentially nor virtually included in this, nor is it this very concept. Therefore, it is not produced by any such activator.¹⁷

¹⁶In fact, Scotus seems to be criticizing Henry of Ghent's view of analogy. For Henry's account of analogy, see Jos Decorte, "Henry of Ghent on Analogy: Critical Reflections on Jean Paulus' Interpretation," in *Henry of Ghent: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on the Occasion of the Anniversary of His Death (1293)*, ed. W. Vanhamel (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), 71–95. For some additional historical context and sources for Aquinas's theory of analogy, see Philip L. Reynolds, "Analogy of Names in Bonaventure," *Mediaeval Studies* 65 (2003): 117–62.

¹⁷Scotus, *Ordinatio*, Book 1, d. 3, pars 1, qq. 1–2 in *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Arthur Hyman and James J. Walsh, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1973), 604, 205. Thomas Williams in "John Duns Scotus," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Spring 2010 Edition, ed. Edward N. Zalta, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2010/entries/duns-scotus/>, explains this passage as follows: "Aquinas had said that all our concepts come from creatures. Scotus says, very well, where will that analogous concept come from? It can't come from anywhere. If all our concepts come from creatures (and Scotus doesn't deny this), then the concepts we apply to God will also come from creatures. They won't just be *like* the concepts that come from creatures, as in analogous predication; they will have to be *the very same* concepts that come from creatures, as in univocal predication. Those are the only concepts we can have—the only concepts we can possibly get. So if we can't use the concepts we get from creatures, we can't use any concepts at all, and so we can't talk about God—which is false."

In this passage, Scotus is identifying what can be called the “Aristotelian Epistemological Principle” (AEP), a principle to which Aquinas is thoroughly committed, which purports that the necessary and sufficient condition for all our knowledge is cognition operating within the confines of phantasms and the operation of the active intellect.¹⁸ On Scotus’s articulation, AEP is not violated as long as one has direct acquaintance with some sensation of an object x from which a concept is formed or if the concept derived from some sensation of object x is univocally equivalent with some concept through which object y is understood, even though one has not had any direct sensation of object y . Ruling out analogous concepts, Scotus holds that every concept produced through this process (including those concepts through which God is understood) must be at least univocally equivalent with any possible object known through them. This is because, by Scotus’s lights, analogous concepts are new concepts that do not arise directly from the natural cognitive operation of phantasms and the active intellect nor are they univocally equivalent to them. Having not been produced in accordance with the AEP the occasion of their cognitive production is called into question and they cannot be thought to be reliably or truthfully predicated of God nor have the power to signify anything at all.

The force of Scotus’s view lies in questioning the reliability of a concept that is not formed in union with phantasms and the active intellect. Such a concept formed independently of these grounding principles would be inexplicable, unnatural and foreign. Scotus’s argument raises the concern that such a concept unnaturally formed is either unintelligible or unreliable in expressing knowledge. Thus, an epistemological problem arises. Specifically, this criticism can be seen to attack Aquinas’s position by questioning the epistemological status of his theory of proportionality. That is, with the propositions “Socrates is wise” and “God is wise,” although wisdom in relation to Socrates is produced in conformity with the AEP, if wisdom in relation to God is not univocal with wisdom understood in relation to Socrates, the concept of wisdom will have changed in such a way as to be independent from its natural epistemic foundation and justification. Such a concept has to be at worst unintelligible, or at best, unreliable (it is arbitrarily and unjustifiedly predicated of God). Ultimately, what this criticism shows us is that the analogous concept is ungrounded and unable to reflect truly upon its subject.

Alternatively, Aquinas would reject Scotus’s formulation of the AEP and instead opt for a weaker version such as “a belief must be semantically related

¹⁸N.B., I am not arguing here that Scotus himself would hold to the AEP as it is formulated here (that is, he may hold that there are exceptions to this rule). However, this formulation is helpful to understanding his criticism in way that is sensitive to Aquinas’s own epistemological commitments.

or grounded in some experience in order to be known.”¹⁹ One such semantic grounding for our beliefs would be the notion of acquaintance, in which one is acquainted with x if and only if one knows x where x is some possible object of direct perceptual experience.²⁰ Since the AEP for Aquinas is not exclusively joined to acquaintance, Aquinas allows analogous concepts to indeed have a sufficient epistemic foundation for knowledge. As mentioned above, with such analogous naming there is a semantic bridge that is created between the standard meaning of a term and its analogous meaning through a grasp of the proportionality relationship between the propositions. With the propositions, “Socrates is wise” and “God is wise,” the sense of “wise” is altered from its original meaning—obtained via acquaintance—to its new sense by reflecting on how wisdom fits Socrates in relation to how it can possibly fit with God according to this proportion.²¹ This

¹⁹For Aquinas’s theory of cognition in the context of epistemic foundationalism see Ralph McNerny, “Analogy and Foundationalism in Thomas Aquinas,” in *Rationality, Religious Belief, and Moral Commitment: New Essays in the Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Robert Audi and William J. Wainwright (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 271–88.

²⁰This notion of acquaintance is broader than how it is used by empiricists such as Bertrand Russell. This broader notion of acquaintance implies that one can be acquainted with an object that one has not directly experienced through the faculty of abstraction of universal concepts from particulars. For example, on this definition, it is true to say that I am acquainted with a dog that I have never seen before because I know that it has an essence and organic structure that is the same as the one that I have abstracted from an actual experience from a different dog. This account is similar to the definition of “acquaintance” and the “Aristotelian Epistemic Principle” used in Paul Symington, “The Aristotelian Epistemic Principle and the Problem of Divine Naming in Aquinas,” *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 85 (2011): 133–44.

²¹This way of looking at analogy—as the process of altering an original notion to form a new one—I think avoids the criticism that Ross directs toward classical accounts of analogy in James Ross, *Portraying Analogy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Ross charges classical accounts of analogy with a faulty view of semantics that holds a kind of monistic account of concepts that come packaged with a determinate and fixed meaning in the mind and are signified by words, through which things are signified. On my interpretation of this piece of Aquinas’s view of analogy, there is a kind of performative analysis of analogy that does not necessitate this view rejected by Ross. I think that there is a similar deflection of Ross’s criticism that the classical semantics has a faulty view of the meaning of a proposition on a molecular meaning based entirely on the individual meanings of its atomic parts. On my interpretation, one considers meanings in the context of whole judgments. My interpretation also leans on the side of Burrell, who argues that Aquinas does not have a theory of analogy as such, since I argue that it has a functional or performative reality. This is true even though I defend that there is a cognitive process that is based on the proportionality that we see in mathematics, without it being identical with it. On my view, I hope to portray a resonance with Burrell’s desire to “liberate the entire discussion [on analogy] from the confinement of a particular school and articulate a more catholic interest,” and to avoid a formalistic analysis in favor of one grounded in “a purposive use of language.” See David Burrell, *Analogy and Philosophical Language* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), 9 and 18, respectively. What is unique to my position is that the guidance for our understanding of analogy is the Aristotelian Epistemic Principle. For a discussion of this criticism in the context

semantic connection offsets the problem of deriving a concept that is neither abstracted from direct experience nor univocally equivalent to one that is.

However, in the spirit of Scotus's criticism a sophisticated version or interpretation can be proffered, which I call the "Semantic/Epistemic Problem" (SEP). Essentially, SEP objects to the idea that the notion of God can be a previously known factor by which one can alter the original meaning of the predicate to be true of God.

By way of introduction to the SEP, take the set of all humanly knowable propositions. This set is identical to the set of propositions that are in conformity with the AEP. These sets can be broken down exhaustively into two mutually exclusive subsets. Subset one will be those propositions that have semantic components each of which can be known by acquaintance. Subset two will be those propositions that possess components that are not all known by acquaintance but in conformity with the AEP. The question is, what criterion can be used to identify which propositions are included in subset two? Aquinas seems to hold that if a proposition meets the requirement of being formed in accordance with the analogy of proportionality then that proposition will be in the second subset.²² In order for a given proposition (u) to meet this requirement, it must meet the following conditions:

- (1) the term in the predicate place of the given proposition (u) must not be known by acquaintance;
- (2) the subject term of the given proposition (u) must be known in a way that meets the conditions of the AEP;
- (3) there must be some other proposition (v) that has subject and predicate known in a way that meets the conditions of the AEP;
- (4) there must be some proportionality between the subject and predicate in the other proposition (v) that is known in a way that meets the conditions of the AEP;
- (5) the proportionality between the subject and the predicate in the other proposition (v) that is known in a way that meets the conditions of the AEP must be able to be applicable to the subject term of the given proposition (u) to derive the meaning of the predicate term in the given proposition.

of a defense of Cajetan, see Joshua Hochschild, "Analogy, Semantics, and Hermeneutics: The 'Concept versus Judgment' Critique of Cajetan's *De Nominum Analogia*," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 11 (2003): 241–60.

²²Cajetan holds that proportionality is the one genuine form of analogy. See Thomas De Vio, *The Analogy of Names and the Concept of Being*, trans. Edward A. Bushinski (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1953). In that case, it would seem that for Cajetan, the second subset identified here would be identical with those propositions that can be known by proportionality.

Given these conditions for a proposition to be known, can propositions of the form “God is *P*” be known through the analogy of proper proportionality? Does any proposition of the form “God is *P*” satisfy (1)–(5)? At this point, an objector may claim that in fact in this case condition (2) is not met, since it is not clear that the term “God” is known in a way that satisfies AEP. On one hand, God is not known by acquaintance. On the other hand, it does not seem to be the case that there is some other proposition (*u*) of the form “*S* is God” that is itself a proposition that can be known through the analogy of proportionality. In this way, it does not seem that any proposition of the form “*S* is God” can possibly meet the conditions for being in the second subset of humanly knowable propositions (articulated by conditions (1)–(5)). In light of this, SEP makes its appearance for it seems that the attempt at trying to identify “God is *P*” by appealing to a prior proposition “*S* is God” (*v*) fails. This can be considered a version of what Hochschild calls the “The Two Unknowns Objection”;²³ namely, that the term that is unknown is not only the sense of the predicate in “God is *P*,” but also the term “God” is not known in a satisfactory way to satisfy the AEP.

The main support for the SEP is as follows: in order to offer semantic support to reliably alter an original concept to be appropriate of God (God is *P*), there is required previous knowledge of what “God” means (as per (2) above). But since “God” is not ever known by acquaintance (for the wayfarer), “God,” in order to satisfy the AEP, must itself be known by analogy of proportionality. However, one must identify some other terms to serve as semantic support for determining how the term “God” should be altered to fit some proper subject that is proportionate to the altered term “God” (i.e., “*O* is God”). But in order to understand such a subject term (*O*), one must either know it through acquaintance or itself through a relationship of proper proportionality to still some other terms. Ultimately, there exists an infinite regress since, it would seem, one cannot identify exactly what the ultimate terms would be to terminate the regress of prior understandings to support an understanding of God.

III.

Solutions to the Semantic/Epistemic Problem. To avoid the SEP, we shall look at the semantic components associated with Aquinas’s real distinction between existence and essence. Of course, the distinction is well-tread territory for students of Aquinas’s thought. The idea of the real distinction is that the essence of a thing is a principle of a thing—*essentia*—by which it is able to identified as a being of a certain quiddity; and there is a distinct further principle—*esse*—which is that by which a thing exists. However, there are distinctive semantic compo-

²³Hochschild, *The Semantics of Analogy*, 129–30.

nents that attach to these real principles. Of course, the semantic component that relates to an essence is a thing's definition. But Aquinas also mentions that there are semantic components related to the *esse* principle. In *De ente et essentia*, Aquinas identifies distinctly semantic components that attach to *esse*: when a thing is *considered* as a whole "according to the existence it has in this or that."²⁴ Furthermore, one can consider something insofar as it has singular existence or existence in the mind.²⁵ That is, the meaning of existence in some cases is that of singular being (or, being with the "flavor" of being singular) and in other cases it includes the notion of being universal or in the mind. In this way, one can consider existence according to various modes (modes of being) and one can consider essence along the lines of that which involves the notion of being considered under formal aspects. The latter semantic component Aquinas calls a thing's *ratio*.

Aquinas identifies this distinction across the ten Aristotelian categories of real being. Aquinas refers to a two-fold understanding of "category" in the *Summa theologiae*:

There are two ways to consider the nine genera of accidents, [1] of which one way is the "to be" [*esse*], which belongs to every accident according to which it is an accident. And this "to be in a subject" [*inesse subjecto*] is common to every one of them; for, the "to be" of an accident is "to be in" [2]. The other, which is able to be considered in each one, is the proper *ratio* of each of those genera.²⁶

First it should be pointed out that Aquinas is examining this two-fold distinction specifically in semantic terms (as signaled by the term *considerandum*). Second, Aquinas, is considering the categories of things according to two aspects. One can first consider the *esse* proper to a category.²⁷ Since categories exist outside

²⁴Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, caput 2. See Thomas Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, trans. Armand Maurer (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1961).

²⁵For Aquinas's notion of *habens esse*, see John Knasas, *Being and Some 20th Century Thomists* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

²⁶Aquinas, *ST I*, q. 28, a. 2: "Ad cuius evidentiam, considerandum est quod in quolibet novem generum accidentis est duo considerare. Quorum unum est esse quod competit unicuique ipsorum secundum quod est accidens. Et hoc communiter in omnibus est inesse subjecto: accidentis enim esse est inesse. Aliud quod potest considerari in unoquoque, est propria ratio uniuscuiusque illorum generum." *Summa theologiae. Pars Prima et Prima Secundae*, ed. P. Caramelo, Leonine edition (Torino-Roma: Marietti, 1952). My translation. I am following the distinction that I make in *On Determining What There Is: The Identity of Ontological Categories in Aquinas, Scotus and Lowe* (New Brunswick: Ontos, 2010).

²⁷For relevant treatments of modes of being in the context of categories see Robert Pasnau, *Metaphysical Themes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 188–91; 230–4; Paul Symington, "Categories and Modes of Being: A Discussion of Robert Pasnau's *Metaphysical Themes*," *Proceedings*

of the mind, this conception of categories is based on the different ways in which categories are found to exist extra-mentally.²⁸ But a category can also be considered according to its proper *ratio*, or according to a formal (essential) consideration. In this context, a *ratio* is a mental grasp or *intentio* of the common nature of a category without a consideration of how it is found to exist. For example, the *ratio* of substance is whatever one thinks about when thinking about the essential designation of substance as it is considered absolutely (apart from its mode of being).²⁹ Alternatively, one can consider a category according to how it is found to exist; according to its mode of being.

Just as important to the distinction between modes of being and *rationes* is how they are understood to relate to each other. Specifically, a mode of being is the grasp of being that it is precisely as determined by the *ratio*. A mode of being can be thought of as an intelligible grasp of the way in which existence itself—the act of being—is delimited and contracted to a certain expression.³⁰

But, let us turn to a discussion of analogy to see how this two-fold sense of categorial predicates fits into the picture. A nice text that highlights this is the well-known one from Aquinas's *Commentary on the Sentences*:

Now a term is predicated analogically in three ways: [1] solely as regards the concepts [*intentionem*] involved; [2] as regards the act of existing [*esse*], but not the concept; [3] as regards both the concept and the act of existing. The first mode of analogical predication is present when one concept is attributed to a number of things by priority and posteriority, yet is realized in but one of them. Thus the concept of health is applied to the animal, to urine, and to diet in various ways, according to priority and posteriority, though not according to a diverse act of existing, because health exist actually only in the animal.

The second mode of analogical predication is in effect when several things are put on an equal footing under one and the same common

of the Society for Medieval Logic and Metaphysics 11 (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 27–56; and Robert Pasnau “Response to Arlig and Symington,” *Proceedings of the Society for Medieval Logic and Metaphysics* 11, 57–75.

²⁸Aquinas, *In Met.* 5.9, n. 889. See Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle*, trans. John P. Rowan (Notre Dame: Dumb Ox Books, 1994).

²⁹For example, Henninger says that for Aquinas the *ratio* is related to the absolute consideration of an essence meaning that it is the consideration of an essence apart from its ontological reality in an individual or in the mind. See Mark G. Henninger, S.J., *Relations: Medieval Theories 1250–1325* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 15.

³⁰For a compelling argument for the notion of essence as delimiting being in Aquinas see Norris Clark, *The One and the Many* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001). Frs. Joseph Owens and Laurence Dewan also write on this topic. See Joseph Owens, “Thomas Aquinas” in *Individuation in Scholasticism: The Later Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation, 1150–1650* (New York: The State University of New York Press, 1994), 173–94.

concept, although the nature that they share in common exists diversely in them. Thus all bodies [however diverse they may be in their actual existence] are on par so far as the concept of corporeity is concerned. Thus the logician, who considers intentions only, says that the term body is predicated univocally of all bodies, and yet corporeity does not exist in corruptible and in incorruptible bodies in the same mode. Hence, for the metaphysician and the philosopher of nature, who consider things in their actual being, neither the term body nor any other term is said univocally of corruptible and incorruptible things, as is clear from what the Philosopher and the Commentator say.

The third mode of analogical predication is found where there is no equality either with respect to the common concept involved or to actual existence. It is in this mode of being (*ens*), for instance, is predicated of substance and accident. And in all such cases the common term must exist in some way in each of the things of which it is predicated, while differing with respect to greater or lesser perfection. And so, I say that truth and goodness and all such terms [i.e., all terms signifying pure perfections] are in this mode predicated analogically of God and creatures.³¹

Here Aquinas differentiates the ways in which a predicate can be analogically predicated: according to the concept (*intentio*; cf. *considerandum* used in the above passages) and not according to being (*esse*), according to being but not according to concept, and according to both concept and being.³² This is a key

³¹Aquinas, *I Sent.* 19.5.2 ad. 1, in *An Introduction to the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. James F. Anderson (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1997), 37–8.

³²For further support that the above passage from the Sentences is indeed a characterization of analogous naming, see Laurence Dewan, O.P., “St. Thomas and Analogy: The Logician and the Metaphysician,” in *Laudemus viros gloriosos: Essays in Honor of Armand Maurer, CSB*, ed. R. E. Houser (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press), 132–45. Especially to be identified as a genuine mode of analogy is the so-called analogy of inequality (so dubbed by Cajetan), where something is analogous according to being but not according to meaning. The complaint against analogy of inequality is that it is not analogy according to concept. See, Paul G. Kuntz, “A Critique of Cajetan’s *Analogy of Names*,” *The New Scholasticism* 56, no. 1 (1982): 66. Armand Maurer, “St. Thomas and the Analogy of Genus,” *The New Scholasticism* 29, no. 2 (1955): 127–44, argues that Cajetan fails to see that analogy of inequality (or genus) is a true case of analogy for the following reason: “If analogy is considered simply in terms of essences and concepts abstracted through simple apprehension, the analogy of genus is bound to appear as another case of univocity. It is only when, like St. Thomas himself, we view analogy primarily from the point of view of judgment, based upon *esse* and its modes, that we can understand how the analogy of genus is, in a sense, a true analogy for the philosopher of nature, for the metaphysician, and, we may add, for the theologian,” 144. On my view, as we shall see, although modes of being of God are not technically concepts (since they are arrived at through reflection on act of judgment), nevertheless, it contains semantic content such that it can serve as an independent guide to alter original concepts to make them able to be accurately predicably of God.

text for understanding how Aquinas combines distinct semantic aspects to present a two-fold sense of analogical predication because with this distinction in mind, we can easily interpret the tri-fold distinction: The first mode of analogy expresses difference and relation among the *rationes* only and not according to modes of being, as with the well-worn example of health: the analogical senses of health are differences in *rationes* but not differences in modes of being because each thing is called healthy according to its causal relationship to the being of an animal. The second mode of analogy is according to a consideration of modes of being and not according to *rationes* insofar as things that are identical according to *ratio* exist in different ways from each other. Two propositions that would qualify as examples of this for Aquinas would be “A heavenly sphere is a body,” and “A tree is a body.” According to Aquinas, a heavenly sphere exists as an incorruptible thing and a tree exists as a corruptible thing.

The third mode of analogy combines the first and second.³³ Here, there is a difference in both *ratio* and mode of being of the analogous term. To further expand upon this third way as it relates to Divine naming given in the Sentences commentary, let us turn to a relevant discussion that utilizes similar language in the *Summa contra gentiles*:

[T]he names said of God and creatures are predicated neither univocally nor equivocally but analogically, that is, according to an order or reference to something one. . . . In the . . . mode of analogical predication the order according to the name (*nomen*) and according to reality (*rem*) is sometimes found to be the same and sometimes not. For the order of the name follows the order of knowledge because it is the sign of an intelligible conception (*conceptionis*). When, therefore, that which is prior in reality is found likewise to be prior in knowledge, the same thing is found to be prior both according to the meaning of the name (*rationem nominis*) and according to the nature of the thing (*rei naturam*). Thus, substance is prior to accident both in nature, in so far as substance is the cause of accident, and in knowledge, in so far as substance is included in the definition of accident. Hence, being is said of substance by priority over accident both according to the nature of the thing and according to the meaning of the name. But when that which is prior in nature is subsequent in our knowledge, then there is not the same order in analogicals according to reality and according to the meaning of the name. . . . Thus, therefore, because we come to a knowledge of God from other things, the reality in the names said of God and other things belongs by priority in God

³³Cajetan, in his *Analogy of Names*, 29, identifies this mode of analogy described here as analogy of proper proportionality because “the analogates are not considered equal in the perfection expressed by the common name, nor in the ‘to be’ of this perfection, yet they agree proportionally both in the perfection expressed by that name and in its ‘to be.’”

according to His mode of being, but the meaning of the name belongs to God by posteriority. And so He is said to be named from His effects.³⁴

It should be pointed out that Aquinas is using some different language here than in the passages above. Clearly, however, he is connecting the order according to *nomen* with analogy according to *intentionem*. To communicate this, he also uses the familiar terms of *conceptionis and rationem*. Less clear is his discussion of order according to what is prior in reality. It is not straightforward that by *rem* he means “reality,” as is given by the translator. However, such an association is not unprecedented in Aquinas—for example, Aquinas associates the division of being into the categories as both a division into what is real, and a division into *res*³⁵—and it fits the pattern of analogy according to meaning and being, which we see elsewhere in his works.

The best way to illustrate Aquinas’s view on how God is named according to both meaning and being is to tie in his view on the analogy of proportionality. Take the propositions “*S* is *P*” and “*T* is *P*,” in which *S* is “Socrates,” *P* is “wise” and *T* is “God.” Now, we will recall that there is no discernible proportion between *S* and *T* when analogy of Divine names is concerned because God is not really related to the created order. However, as with analogy of proper proportionality, the meaning of *P* in relation to *T* is grounded in the prior meaning of *P* in relation to *S*. That notion is used to generate a new meaning for *P* by paralleling that proportion with that which is appropriate for *T*. This is what is meant by the order that the analogous term *P* (in relation to *T*) has to the prior meaning of *P* (in relation to *S*).

But in the *Summa contra gentiles* passage cited above, the sense of *P* is extended and altered in a two-fold way: according to the notion of reality (*naturam*) and according to the notion of meaning (*rationem*). This distinction should be understood in relation to Aquinas’s view of the two-fold notion of a categorically inclusive predicate term according to its mode of being and its proper *ratio*. As mentioned above, the former arises from a grasp of the way in which a thing is found to exist. The latter involves a grasp of the sense of the term independently of its mode of being. Along these lines Aquinas provides a distinction regarding the different ways that an analogical term *P* (regarding *T*) can be ordered to the prior grasp of *P* (in relation to *S*). In one way, an analogical term presupposes knowledge of it as it is obtained originally through cognition (as it is expressed in *P*’s relation to *S*). Aquinas says that in this way the order follows the order of knowledge (*cognitione*) and this pertains to the *ratio* of the term. The sense

³⁴Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, trans. Anton Pegis (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 1.34.

³⁵See Thomas Aquinas, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio*, eds. M. R. Cathala and R. M. Spiazzi (Turin-Rome, 1950), lib. 5, lect. 9.

of the analogical term *P* as it is known independently of how it exists, presupposes and extends the notion of the *ratio* of *P* in relation to *S*. In another way, an analogical predicate term *P* presupposes knowledge of *P* as it exists in reality in relation to *S*. This means that in order to know how the analogical predicate term *P* exists, there is presupposed an understanding of how *P* exists in relation to *S*. So, there is a two-fold proportionality through which the analogical predicate term *S* is altered: according to the proportionality between the way that *P* exists in relation to *S* and the proportionality between the *ratio* of *P* in relation to *S*. With a presupposition of these two prior proportionalities, a new sense of the term can be obtained in relation to *T*.

Aquinas points out that sometimes the order between the sense of the mode of being of the term and the *ratio* of the term are the same. This means that regarding propositions “*S* is *P*” and “*T* is *P*,” sometimes the sense of *P* in relation to *T* presupposes the sense of *P* in relation to *S* both according to mode of existence and *ratio*. The example that Aquinas gives involves the propositions “Substance is a being,” and “Accident is a being,” but we can use the more specific example of “Socrates is a being,” and “The white [thing] is a being.” According to the *ratio* of white, there is presupposed the notion of the *ratio* of substance because the very *ratio* of accident is in itself incomplete and requires completion through the notion of substance (accidents are individuated by substances). So, in order to understand what white is, there is presupposed a prior notion of substance. Thus, in order to say that an accident is a being, knowledge of what a substance is is presupposed; in our case, in order to understand what white is, there is presupposed the notion of the substance-that-is-white. Thus, one needs to know what a substance is in order to know what an accident is, and what white is needs to be known in order to know what the sense of “being” is in order grasp the proposition “The white is a being.” Beyond this, according to the mode of being of an accident, there is also presupposed the notion of the mode of being of substance. The mode of being for accidents (and for white) is “being in” (*in esse*), an understanding which presupposes that there are some beings that exist not in some other, which are substances.³⁶ In this way, the concept of an accident as a being involves a two-fold consideration of an accident in order to derive an appropriately altered notion of “being” which is predicated of it. Of course, there seems to be no major obstacle regarding how we know that the altered meaning of “being” is true of an accident because we come to know accidental being in a way that satisfies the AEP (See Figure 1).³⁷

³⁶See Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 6, and B. F. Brown, *Accidental Being* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985).

³⁷Although the way in which we know accidental being is not as straightforward as the way of knowing something through acquaintance.

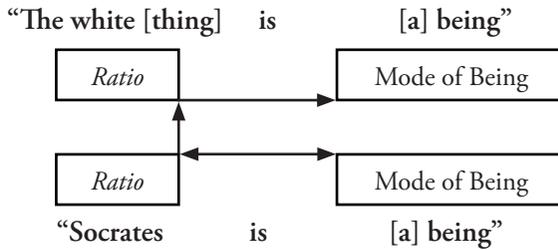


Figure 1

This figure (Figure 1) shows how the sense of “being” as predicated of the accident white obtains its meaning: “being” is first understood as it is predicated of Socrates, which is understood both according to Socrates’s mode of being—namely, being not in another—and according to Socrates’s *ratio*, which is that through which Socrates is a being, and is that through which the act of existence of Socrates is delimited to some distinctive mode of being—namely, rational animal. Second, the *ratio* of white is grasped, and understood to include as its principle of individuation (in this case) the primary substance Socrates. Finally, what is grasped is the way in which the existing white is found to exist; namely, as existing in Socrates. Thus, due to the priority of the *ratio* of Socrates and his mode of being to the *ratio* of white, we can now come to understand the new meaning of being as it is predicated of “the white [thing].”

In the context of Divine names, he suggests that the order between the sense of the mode of being of the term and the *ratio* can be different. Regarding “*S* is *P*” and “*T* is *P*,” rather than there being a proportionality prior according to a mode of being and *ratio* in “*S* is *P*,” only the proportionality of the *ratio* of *P* in relation to *S* is prior to the sense of *P* in relation to *T*. That is, the *ratio* of *P* in relation to *T* presupposes and extends the *ratio* of *P* in relation to *S*. However, regarding the mode of being that is proper to *P*, it is precisely *P* in relation to *T* that is prior to the mode of being proper to *P* in relation to *S*! From this, we see that regarding the propositions, “Socrates is wise,” and “God is wise,” the *ratio* of “wise” presupposes the *ratio* of “wise” in relation to Socrates (or some creature). At the same time, it is true that the mode of being of wisdom is known to be properly prior in God and not to creatures because God’s existence is prior to any creaturely existence, including the existence of wisdom. So, the *ratio* is prior according to our cognition but is prior in God according to reality, or according to mode of being. The following figure (Figure 2) shows the semantic priority among the terms regarding the mode of being of the term in God’s mode of be-

ing and the semantic priority of the *ratio* of the predicate term in created things with which we have epistemic acquaintance.³⁸

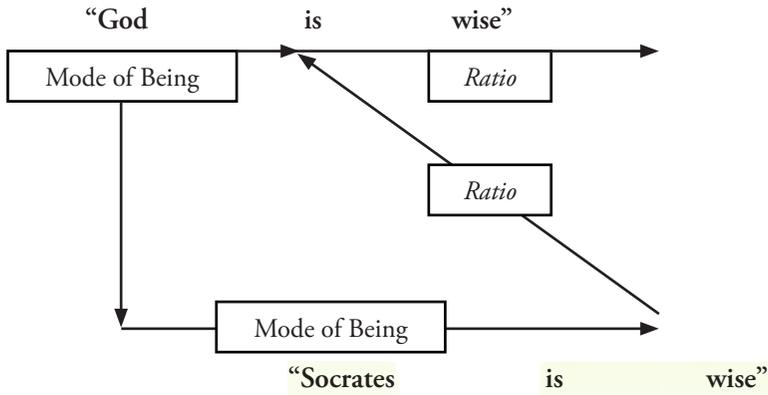


Figure 2

Thus, we see that the *ratio* is prior in its relation to Socrates, in which it is epistemically grounded. The mode of being of Socrates and his *ratio* are presupposed when understanding the mode of being and *ratio* of his wisdom. However, the being of Socrates and his wisdom are posterior to the being of God. But, since distinct *rationes* delimit being to different modes, the priority of the mode of being of God must be proportionate to the *ratio* that signifies it. Thus, the *ratio* of wisdom needs to be altered in way that is proportionate to how wisdom can exist in God. If there is no conflict between the altered *ratio* and God's mode of being, then the predicate expressed by it will be literally true of God.³⁹

But what about this prior notion of the mode of being of God? Is such a prior notion possible? The answer is "Yes," because an understanding of God's mode of being follows from the method of proofs for God's existence; namely, from what is learned about God's being through the five ways, and those fur-

³⁸Cf. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and His Nature*, vol. 1, trans. Bede Rose (St. Louis: Herder, 1934, 1936), 218–20: "there are not two unknown elements in each of these proportions, but two terms known immediately with their created mode, one term expressing the uncreated analogue which is mediately known (the first cause), when we infer the presence of the fourth term, which until then remained unknown. It may be expressed by saying that there is a similarity of proportion between the creature with its mode of being and the first cause with its mode of being." Quoted from Hochschild, *Semantics of Analogy*, 130.

³⁹Given this account of analogy of proportionality, this becomes a first step in the way of analogy. After this new concept is formed, there is opened up an analogy in which we predicate names of God by attribution where there is a *pros hen* order to God as the source of all subsequent perfections in creatures. However, this would fit more into the category of an analogy of names rather than an analogy of concept discovery.

ther conclusions that are drawn from them that we see in *Summa theologiae* I, questions 3–11. The kind of knowledge that we have of God’s mode of being in this way is indirect. It is knowledge of the way that God is found to exist understood through the created order’s relation to God.⁴⁰ It is, as Aquinas describes, not quidditative knowledge but rather knowledge *quia*.⁴¹ God’s modes of being include the following list: Simplicity, Uncreatedness, Immateriality, Unity, Eternity, Infinity, etc. Thus, on Aquinas’s account one can avoid the original problem articulated above by saying that the modes of being of God are presupposed when naming Him through proportionality and gives us prior knowledge through which we may know how to alter our original creaturely concepts or *rationes* in an appropriate way to be fitting of God.⁴² So, Aquinas is not saying that our knowledge of God’s mode of being is prior in an absolute sense, but in fact, the mode of being of God has a semantic role that serves as a prior grasp in obtaining the analogical senses for naming God.⁴³

⁴⁰When we introduce this notion of modes of being of God into the picture, as a prior source involved in the analogical process, it seems that we depart from a notion of proportionality. Namely, the relationship that we have to God by which we know that he exists (and how we know about him through this) is not straightforwardly proportionality. This may be the reason why Aquinas seems to “import . . . elements of the analogy of attribution into the analogy of proportionality,” rather than abandoning one mode of analogy for another. See Richard Lee, “The Analogies of Being in St. Thomas Aquinas,” *The Thomist* 58 (1994), 471. For further recognition that Aquinas seems to alternate between proportionality and attribution in regards to Divine naming, see E. Jennifer Ashworth, “Petrus Fonseca on Objective Concepts and the Analogy of Being,” in *Logic and the Workings of the Mind: The Logic of Ideas and Faculty Psychology in Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Patricia A. Easton (Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview Publishing Company, 1997), 53–4. Ralph J. Masiello in “The Analogy of Proportion According to the Metaphysics of St. Thomas,” *The Modern Schoolman* 35 (1958): 91–105, argues that analogy of proportion is better suited to “treating participated and unparticipated being,” 105. He may be right about this regarding understanding God’s mode of being, but not with the case of Divine naming, which requires proportionality.

⁴¹By “knowledge *quia*” I mean, “knowledge of the fact.” This is opposed to knowledge *propter quid*, which is “knowledge of the reasoned fact.”

⁴²See Bernard Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being According to Thomas Aquinas*, trans. E. M. Macierowski (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2004). In this way, we can still claim that “Being . . . belongs *per prius* to God and *per posterius* to creatures,” 81, with the further proviso that God’s modes of being are known in a way prior to the application of Divine names of Him while still maintaining that all knowledge of creatures are prior in cognition, so that in “no way do we have the power of abstracting a notion—not even that of being—by which we would rise above the created and the uncreated,” 85. For an extension of Montagnes see Reinhard Hütter, “Analogical Concept versus Analogical Judgment: Whose Aquinas, Which Rationality? A Discussion of *Speaking the Incomprehensible God: Thomas Aquinas on the Interplay of Positive and Negative Theology*,” *Nova et Vetera* 5, no. 2 (2007): 445–64.

⁴³I agree with Victor Salis that ultimately this account of analogy is judgmental in character and not merely conceptual; however, I hold that being plays a prior semantic role to aid in the conception of a concept that is true of God. See Victor Salis, “The Judgmental Character of Thomas Aquinas’s Analogy of Being,” *The Modern Schoolman* 85, no. 2 (2008): 117–42. This

These Divine names are analogous according to meaning (*ratio*) and being (mode of being). Regarding how Aquinas understands the *ratio* to be changed before a term is to be applied to God, let's turn to an example that Aquinas gives in *Summa theologiae* I, question 13, article 5. In this article, Aquinas argues against the possibility of a univocal term being predicated of God and creatures:

[When] the term "wise" [is] applied to man, we signify some perfection distinct from a man's essence, and distinct from his power and existence, and from all similar things; whereas when we apply to it God, we do not mean to signify anything distinct from His essence, or power, or existence. . . . Hence it is evident that this term "wise" is not applied in the same

is because knowledge of modes of being involves knowledge of existence, and existence cannot only be known at the second level of cognition. Analogy of proportionality, according to Armand Maurer, falls safely into the judgment of analogy since it "is a judgment of the likeness of several proportions." See Maurer, "St. Thomas and the Analogy of Genus," 143. For a nice comparison of Aquinas and Scotus on the nature of judgment, see Giorgio Pini, "Scotus on Assertion and the Copula: A Comparison with Aquinas," in *Medieval Theories on Assertive and Non-assertive Language: Acts of the 14th European Symposium on Medieval Logic and Semantics, Rome, June 11–15, 2002* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 2004): 307–31. The modes of being through which God is known is toward a *secundum se* sense of being as opposed to a *quoad nos* account of being, where the former is characterized by a notion of being that is unlimited. See Gyula Klima, "Being, Unity and Identity in the Fregean and Aristotelian Traditions." As is evident in this paper, I also agree with Salis's claim that "Thomas's doctrine of analogy goes hand-in-hand with his understanding of the causal relationship between God and creation": Victor Salis, "The Ontology of Analogy in Aquinas: A Response to Laurence Hemming," *The Heythrop Journal* 50 (2009): 643. Contrary to this, Paul Hemming holds that analogy does not involve causality and that there is no real analogy of being in Aquinas. See Paul Hemming, "Analogia non Entis sed Entitatis: The Ontological Consequences of the Doctrine of Analogy," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 6, no. 2 (2004): 118–29. However, I have stressed the discovery function of analogy, which can be understood within a framework of semantics, including a semantics of being. It is this prior meaning of being—as the meaning of God's mode of being—that serves to produce an analogical term suitable of God. For a defense of a semantic approach to analogy, see Hochschild, "Analogy, Semantics, and Hermeneutics: The 'Concept versus Judgment' Critique of Cajetan's *De Nominum Analogia*." In this way, as Kevin Flannery, S.J. articulates, I am taking analogous names to be "analogous because they stand within a certain order, *per prius et posterius*, which is part of the artifact known as logic," Flannery, "Aquinas on Analogy," *Gregorianum* 79, no. 2 (1998): 381–94. So in an important way, I am not resistant to McInerny's overall project, described by David B. Burrell, C.S.C., as the attempt "to show how Aquinas managed to articulate the logical and semantic structure of language in such a way as to display its analogical reaches," Burrell, "From Analogy of 'Being' to the Analogy of Being," in *Recovering Nature: Essays in Natural Philosophy, Ethics, and Metaphysics in Honor of Ralph McInerny*, ed. Thomas Hibbs and John O'Callaghan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 253–66. Whether I believe that there is a real analogy of being in Aquinas is beyond the scope of this paper, but I believe that the tri-fold division in the Sentences commentary is indeed an explication of three modes of analogy. For recent discussion of a real analogy of being, see Long, *Analogia entis*.

way to God and to man. The same rule applies to other terms. Hence no name is predicated univocally of God and of creatures.⁴⁴

Here we have an example of the way in which a term is altered according to its *ratio* and mode of being in order for it to be proportionate to God. He refers to the fact that contained in the original sense of “wise” is the notion that it is accidental according to its essence—it is outside the essence of the man of which it is predicated. Because of this, the *ratio* or meaning of wisdom itself needs to be altered so that its meaning might apply to God, and we do so by understanding wisdom to be something contained within the essence of the thing to which it applies. It is important to note that Aquinas understands the alteration of the concept according to its *ratio* to be fundamental; the very identity of the concept has been changed.⁴⁵ Aquinas’s view is that there is no real distinction between a genus and its species, and so when the genus of a concept is changed, the whole concept is changed, and what is identified through such a concept is completely other—in a univocal sense—than the original concept from which it was altered.

In addition, the mode of being that is proper to the meaning of the term in its original sense is also altered. As intimated above, the way that the term is understood in relation to God is very different from the way that it is understood in relation to creatures. As mentioned, “wisdom” is found to exist in God according to the mode of Simplicity in which wisdom is nothing other than the Divine Essence itself. And, since the mode of being is known to be prior to the mode of being of creatures, we understand this newly altered concept to apply first and foremost to God despite the fact that it is known according to its *ratio* as it is proportionate to how it is known in creatures. This prior knowledge of the modes of being of God acts as an epistemological ground to ensure that this altered concept is indeed true of God, despite the fact that it was obtained in such a way independent from what we are acquainted with; namely, from the abstraction of concepts from phantasms of creatures in our experience.

Thus, the weakness of SEP comes to light. We shall first address the second concern that motivated the SEP: it was wondered what could serve as an epistemological grounding for a prior understanding of God by which one can alter the original predicate *P* to be truly predicated of God. It turns out that God’s mode of being can serve as this prior principle. That is, since we know that God is uncaused and absolutely simple, through demonstrations based on God’s effects, and despite the fact that we cannot know God’s essence in this way, we can use these principles to alter predicates that are derived originally

⁴⁴Aquinas, *STI* q.13, a.5, co.

⁴⁵As Hochschild puts it in *Semantics of Analogy*, 14–9: “because proportionally similar things are not generically similar, a single common *ratio* cannot be abstracted from them,” and so there is no sameness between either understood as numerical identity or even sameness in kind.

from creatures to be suitable of God. For example, since wisdom in proportion to Socrates implies that it is an accident of Socrates, we shall have to adjust it in such a way as to be suitable for an absolutely Simple God. In other words, wisdom will not be understood as an accidental property of God, but rather as being identical to God's very nature.⁴⁶

This helps us to address the charge of infinite regress that supports SEP. It is true that the *ratio* that is predicated of God has its semantic content originated from acquaintance with sensate experience and then subsequently altered according to a relationship to a prior notion of God's modes of being and with a proportionality between some other subject and predicate that stand in a like relationship of proportionality. However, the prior notion of God is ultimately grounded not merely in some content with which we are directly acquainted, but identifies the modes of being through which God is correctly grasped. The modes of being of God are not *rationes* in a proper sense of sharing identity of content with that with which we are cognitively acquainted, but rather are understood as the necessary conditions without which what we are acquainted with or know about creatures would be impossible. This provides an absolutely epistemic groundwork for serving to guide the adjustment our content derived from experience to be true of God. In this way, Aquinas claims in *Summa theologiae* I, question 13, article 6 that, "as regards what the name signifies, these names are applied primarily to God rather than to creatures, because these perfections flow from God to creatures; but as regards the imposition of the names, they are primarily applied by us to creatures which we know first."⁴⁷ In other words, the original essence abstracted from creatures remains cognitively foundational but the *ratio* associated with this originally abstracted essence is altered to produce a new *ratio*, which is that through which God can be grasped in some true way.

Furthermore, Aquinas would hold that it is not true that there is no prior knowledge that grounds our judgment that the proportionate relationship between *S* and *P* (regarding creatures) cannot be known to obtain the new sense of *P* in relation to *T* (regarding God). In fact, we know that the mode of being of God alone ultimately underwrites our justification for predicating terms of creatures and alone offers justification for us to say, "Socrates is wise, so much more so is God wise because the perfection of Socrates's wisdom exists preeminently in God" insofar as God is the ultimate efficient cause of Socrates's wisdom. In addition, Aquinas's philosophical commitments also support the method of adjusting a concept according to God's mode of being. This is because God is

⁴⁶See James Anderson, *The Bond of Being: An Essay on Analogy and Existence* (St. Louis, MO: Herder, 1949), 286–90. Anderson recognizes that God is known in some way and so can serve as one of the terms in the proportionality analysis for predicates of God.

⁴⁷Aquinas, *ST* I q.13, a. 6, co.

the source of all perfections—every property in some way is merely a reflection of God’s prior perfection—and so cannot lack any possible perfection that is not inconsistent with his mode of existence.⁴⁸ The justification of this goes all the way back to Aquinas’s fourth way for proving God’s existence: the so-called degrees of perfection argument.⁴⁹

The relationship between creatures and creator is such that the created order implies that there is something of a certain sort that gives rise to it. Aquinas holds that there is indeed an infinite divide between creator and creatures and so “the knower and the things known are in no way proportionate. But here we can [still] have proportionality . . . as the knower is to the thing known so is the knowable to what is known, and such proportionality makes possible a finite knower to grasp something infinite.”⁵⁰ This is what is involved in proportionality when considered as a function of the analogy of discovery.⁵¹

To close this section, I need to address a few additional points concerning the overall viability of Aquinas’s view of analogy for understanding Divine naming. Hochschild (1) points out a circularity objection to a proportionality

⁴⁸This addresses what can be called a sorting problem about which perfections should be predicated of God. The fact is that all attributes are correctly predicated of God as long as they are consistent with God’s modes of being. Cf. Hampus Lyttkens’s denial that analogy of proper proportionality is sufficient to address this sorting problem, in Lyttken, “Analogy of Proportionality as a Mean of Knowledge,” in *The Analogy Between God and the World: An Investigation of its Background and Interpretation of its Use by Thomas of Aquino* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell Boktryckeri AB, 1952), 441–9.

⁴⁹However, it may be necessary to complete this knowledge of God through the fourth way with a doctrine of implicit knowledge of God, which some have argued is present in Aquinas’s work. For example, Matthias Laarmann holds the following in regards to Aquinas: “[I]n the *a priori* manifest *esse* the human mind always implicitly recognizes God, who is the subsistent being existing as such. The implicit knowledge of God is given because man knows that this being cannot fail to exist or that the idea of its non-being must be absolutely excluded.” Laarmann, “God as *Primum Cognitum*: Some Remarks on the Theory of Initial Knowledge of *Esse* and God According to Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Ghent,” in *Henry of Ghent*, 182–3.

⁵⁰Aquinas, *IV Sent.* d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, ad 6. Stephen Lahey, in “Maimonides on Analogy,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (1993): 219–32, puts this analogy with knower and known well when he says just as if the thing known were removed, this would affect the knower, but not vice versa, “[i]f God were in some way erased from the relativity predication, creatures would surely be affected, because their being is contingent upon his necessary being. But if creatures were erased from the relativity predication, God would remain unchanged, because his necessary being is, by definition, not contingent upon another,” 230. Lahey concludes that there is a commensurate disproportionality between creatures and God. I agree that this is the case when considering God’s mode of being, but there is a proportionality between positive attributes predicated of God, as arrived at through the proportionality and known terms to which the term is analogically related.

⁵¹See W. Esdaile Byles, “The Analogy of Being,” *The Modern Schoolman* 16, no. 3 (1943): 349–52.

account of Divine naming and (2) offers the two conditions of *explanation* and *nonreduction* that need to be satisfied for an acceptable analogy theory.⁵²

Regarding (1), the circularity objection calls into question the unity of the analogical concept by charging that the similarity relation between the original term and the altered analogous term remains unspecified, especially since the mathematical relation of similarity is not the similarity that Aquinas has in mind when accounting for Divine naming.

In answer to this, I agree that that Aquinas appeals both to the analogy of proportionality for mathematical ratios and for divine naming, but this does not mean that they are identical. What proportionality with divine naming has in common with that used with mathematical ratios is that one alters the original concept successfully to apply to God given that *S* is known, *P* is known, *T* is known and that there is a sufficient relationship between *S* and *P* to apply to *T* to derive a new notion of *P*. That we know that it is possible for the proportionality between *S* and *P* to be applied to *T* is a result of Aquinas's distinction between a *res significata* and a *modus significandi*.⁵³ Relevant to the possibility of Divine naming, a predicate in itself is applicable to anything in itself absolutely without predicating of it the way by which it is known. For example, when God is said to be "wise" one need not predicate of God that the concept "wisdom" has been derived from an experience of creatures. In this way, there is no intrinsic limit to predicating names of God. In addition, as in the interpretation given above, what delimits the proportionality relationship through which the new meaning of *P* is obtained by an application to *T* is the mediation of what we know of the modes of being of God.⁵⁴ So, if a predicate *P* is true of *S*, and there

⁵²Hochschild, *The Semantics of Analogy*, 131–5.

⁵³Aquinas, *STI* 1 q.13, a.3, co. See Symington, "The Aristotelian Epistemic Principle and the Problem of Divine Naming in Aquinas"; Gyula Klima, "Aquinas on One and Many," *Documenti e Studi sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale* 11 (2000): 195–215; E. Jennifer Ashworth, "Signification and the Modes of Signifying in Thirteenth-Century Logic: A Preface to Aquinas on Analogy," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 1 (1991): 39–67.

⁵⁴In this way, Aquinas's theory involves both positive and negative theology. On one hand, it is positive in that it is literally true that God is wise (when "wise" is understood analogically to the wisdom of Socrates), but on the other hand, it has a strong negative component since the modes of being of God are known through God's effects. This notion coupled with the distinction between *res significata* and *modus significandi*, I believe that Aquinas's view is negative enough to skirt the worries of Maimonides. For a defense of Maimonides against a different interpretation of Aquinas from the view presented in this paper, see Joseph A. Buijs, "A Maimonidean Critique of Thomistic Analogy," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 41, no. 4 (2003): 449–70. In addition, I believe that it is positive enough that, contrary to Marion's claim, we can get some "predicative foothold" on God, although certainly not enough to say that we grasp God through such literally true predications of Him and maintaining an infinite distance between God and God's creatures. See Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being: Hors-Texte*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and Derek J. Morrow, "Aquinas, Marion, Analogy, and *Esse*:"

is a way of altering P to be appropriate of T , then there is nothing preventing P being true of T .⁵⁵

Regarding (2), does this interpretation pass the Hochschild condition of explanation—that an analysis of analogy should not be circular—and the nonreductionist condition—that it should not lapse into univocity? I think so on both counts. On one hand, it meets the condition of explanation insofar as the *explanans* does not in itself contain analogy. Rather, analogy of proper proportionality is the process of altering an original predicate in such a way to be true of God as directed by the knowledge of the mode of being of God and the relationship that holds between the subject S and the predicate P . On the other hand, it does not merely lapse into univocity, when univocity is understood within the context of an ontology of cognition. Concept C is univocal to concept D if and only if there is some common form identical between them. This means that concept C is abstracted from some experience which has a common form to D , which also could have been abstracted from some other experience. For example, “animal” is univocal to “duck” and “pig” because “animal” is the possible product of abstraction from some possible experience. However, this does not hold for the concept that is arrived at through the process of analogical reasoning. The concept produced through the analogical process is no longer identical to the original concept (as mentioned above, if the genus of a species is altered, so too is the species), nor is it the product of some possible abstractive act on some possible experience since it outstrips the possibility of a corresponding phantasm. In this way, there is no identity between the original concept P (viz., P_1) and the resulting concept P (viz., P_2).⁵⁶ At the same time, although concept P_2 expresses something different than P_1 , P_2 still maintains its foundation, and does not run afoul of the AEP. Specifically, the content of P_2 is in a sufficient way derived from P_1 , without it still being able to be applied to the things to

A Phenomenology of the Divine Names?,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 46, no. 1 (2006): 25–42.

⁵⁵One possible problem with this view, though, is that perhaps there are some modes of being of God that we are unaware of, the knowledge of which would render a given predicate inappropriate of God. This would be a kind of skepticism argument against Aquinas’s view. However, such a consideration is beyond the scope of this paper, since we are interested here in establishing the possibility of Divine naming.

⁵⁶Hochschild explains Cajetan’s thoughts on concept: “The concept is the act of simple apprehension, the act of intellect by virtue of which something is understood, and by virtue of which a word is said to signify a thing. Cajetan spells this out in his commentary on *De Ente et Essentia*: ‘a thing is understood at the time when we form its concept. . . . [T]he formation of a concept is the making of the external thing actually known.’” See Hochschild, “Analogy, Semantics, and Hermeneutics,” 251. To this, we would add the AEP, which adds the condition that in order for a concept to be formed it requires some semantic link to experience. In the case of analogous concepts, the semantic link to experience is the original concept’s link to experience.

which P_1 can be applied. What “stretches” the original content of P_1 (grounded in the abstraction of some essence and which continues to serve as a foundation for the new concept discovered) to its new semantic place in P_2 is the relation of proportionality between the available terms of the proportionality unity.⁵⁷

IV.

Conclusion and Observations. I have argued that the doctrine of analogy of proportionality is coherent and can handle the significant epistemic and semantic problems posited for it. The motivation for the attacks on Aquinas’s view is the notion that all of our knowledge comes to us by acquaintance with the created order and that God is Himself completely and really independent of it. However, in order to address these problems, we had to appeal to the notion of modes of being—an ontologically grounded semantic doctrine—to give the required guidance to the process of altering our concepts to make them appropriate of the radically transcendent God.

There are three important observations from this discussion that I would like to underscore. The first is that this account demystifies the semantic function and epistemological ground for making analogical judgments about God, and so avoids the charge that the doctrine of analogy is just so much hand-waving. It cuts to, and addresses, the prior knowledge that seems to be required by a thorough-going account of predicating names of God that have their origins in knowledge and experience of the created order. The account given here addresses the challenge that analogy does not actually resolve the problem of how God can be known because it begs the question (or is viciously circular).

It also addresses the objection that the ultimate ground for analogous naming of God must be univocal in nature. As we have seen, knowledge of modes of being of a term is of a different nature than knowledge of the basic *ratio* of a term. Whereas in the *rationes* “cat” and “snake” there is included the *ratio* “animal,” which is predicated univocally of both an individual cat and dog, this is not the case with modes of being. With the modes of being of individual being and created being, it is not the case that the senses of the word “being” contained in both of these are predicated according to a common sense. Rather there is an important independence between the logic of modes of being and that of *rationes*, for as Aquinas points out in the *Commentary on the Sentences* passage cited above two things can have the same *ratio* and different modes of being—as with “body” applied to an incorruptible body and a corruptible one.

⁵⁷For Cajetan’s understanding of the foundation for the relation of proportionality see Hochschild, *Semantics of Analogy*, 153–7. Although this paper is not an attempt at defending Cajetan’s view of analogy, his views are relevant to this paper due to his able defense of proportionality and its able philosophical analysis by Hochschild.

The second is that it gives insight into how questions 3 to 11 in the *Summa theologiae* relate to the doctrine of the Divine names, which appears in question 13. The former questions describe the way that God is understood to be, as logical consequences from the five ways for proving His existence. Knowledge about God that comes from this analysis is knowledge about the modes of being of God. Once these are established, the doctrine of Divine names becomes possible because now there is an epistemic ground for properly adjusting the positive concepts that we directly obtain through experience to apply to God. The nature of the modes of being is quite peculiar because they are not positive regarding their *rationes* and yet they are not merely negative because they identify to us in a directly intelligible way the way that God exists. The reason for this has to do with the mode of *quia* proof that Aquinas utilizes to establish the existence of God—an indirect method of proof. This is contrasted with a purely negative description, which cannot describe the way that something exists because such descriptions presuppose the existence of the entity in question as well as some positive properties of the thing described.⁵⁸

This points us to a grasp of the complicated semantic relationship that underpins Divine naming: in the order of knowledge, Divine naming presupposes a *secundum se* notion of God, which itself presupposes a *quoad nos* notion of being. A *secundum se* notion of being, which understands God as unlimited Being itself—is given to us through the proofs for God's existence; it is precisely a notion of God insofar as he is unlimited being that offers to us a way of guiding our subsequent names and predicates of Him. However, what is presupposed in such a notion of God is itself a *quoad nos* notion of being, which comes through a prior epistemic grasp of being with material substances as its primary analogate. In this way, metaphysics is not only a preamble to faith, but even to natural theology. However, such considerations are beyond the scope of the paper.

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⁵⁸For an important treatment of the distinction between *quoad nos* versus *secundum se* focal notions of being, see Klima, "Being, Unity and Identity in the Fregean and Aristotelian Traditions," in *Aristotle on Method and Metaphysics*, ed. Edward Feser (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 146–68.