

# A Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis of Aquinas' *ESSE*\*

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## Introduction

Aquinas' position on the nature of so called existential propositions such as '*Socrates est*' appears to be clear, because he declares that '*est*' is a predicate. He says:

[T1] *Expositio Libri Peryermenias*, II, 2, (J.Vrin: Paris, 1989, p.88, ll.36-46): ... hoc uerbum 'est' quandoque in enunciatione predicatur secundum se, ut cum dicitur: «Sortes est», per quod nichil aliud intendimus significare quam quod Sortes sit in rerum natura; quandoque uero non predicatur per se, quasi principale predicatum, set quasi coniunctum principali predicato ad connectendum ipsum subiecto, sicut cum dicitur: «Sortes est albus»: non enim est intentio loquentis ut asserat Sortem esse in rerum natura, set ut attribuat ei albedinem mediante hoc uerbo 'est'; et ideo in talibus 'est' predicatur ut adiacens principali predicato,

(tr.)... the verb 'is' is sometimes predicated in an enunciation by itself, as when it is stated, "Socrates is," by which we intend to signify nothing other than that Socrates is in reality. But sometimes 'is' is not predicated by itself as though the principal predicate, but as though conjoined to the principal predicate in order to connect it to the subject, as when it is stated, "Socrates is white," it is not the intention of the speaker to assert Socrates to be in reality,

but to attribute whiteness to him through the intermediary of this verb 'is'. And therefore in such cases 'is' is predicated as adjacent to the principal predicate.

This passage treats the verb '*est*' unproblematically as a predicate. On the basis of this text, some Thomists<sup>(1)</sup> assert the predicability of 'to be' in Aquinas. According to them, (1) the term '*est*' in "*Socrates est*" is a predicate, and (2) it signifies something, that is, "*esse in rerum natura*."

From a modern point of view, however, Aquinas' position in this text is not so "obvious" as it may first appear. Modern philosophers assume that the logical subject term of a basic proposition connects with or refers to an existent individual when one forms a true statement. Thus the existence of the individual talked about is already given by the act of reference of the logical subject, and cannot in any sense be predicated of the individual. What can be predicated must be properties or characteristics of the individual. The question is whether existence is a property.

## Predicability of *ESSE*

Since Kant many philosophers have thought this question crucial to a proper assessment of the so called Ontological Argument for the existence of God. But in order to avoid the question whether properties themselves exist, and to clarify the logical grammar of existential assertions, it is often thought more convenient to concentrate instead on the linguistic question, that is, whether the word 'is' (or 'exist') is a predicate. If this is the case, it must be true of everything and so redundant. Besides if it is true of everything, then its negative form 'isn't' (or 'doesn't exist') is true of nothing. Thus 'isn't' (or 'doesn't exist') can never be a predicate, neither can 'is' (or 'exist')<sup>(2)</sup>.

This modern point of view concerning the predicability of 'is' is well aware of by Gilson. He clearly says, "*Is* does not predicate anything, not even existence".<sup>(3)</sup> He continues to insist on this view even after being shown the clear text [= T1]. He says, "It is both evident in itself and clear from the texts quoted by Fr. Régis that, in the thought and language of Saint Thomas Aquinas, existence can be predicated. But this does not imply that, in the modern sense of the word, *esse* is a 'predicate.'"<sup>(4)</sup> He replies to his opponent by distinguishing the logical level from the metaphysical one. Logically speaking, *esse* could be said to inhere in the subject Socrates, but metaphysically speaking, it does not, because where there is no *esse* there is no Socrates. Thus according to Gilson '*est*' can be a predicate on the logical level of speaking, while on the metaphysical level of speaking it is not.<sup>(5)</sup>

Gilson's sense of the modern problem concerning the predicability of 'is' deserves our attention. But it is to be asked whether Aquinas has in mind here in T1 the logical predication as distinguished from the metaphysical one.

It is Geach who gives to '*est*' as used by Aquinas a status of a predicate in the modern structure of meaning. He distinguishes two senses of 'is' which he thinks are relevant to Aquinas: "present actuality sense" and "there is' sense".<sup>(6)</sup> He believes that the 'is' in present actuality sense is a predicate of an individual, while the 'is' in 'there is' sense is not.

In 'there is' sense, we say "F-ness is" or "an F exists", which do not predicate existence of an F, but predicate F-ness to something or other. So they are equivalent to "something is F". Geach thinks of this sense of 'is' as relevant to that of '*est*' in "*malum est*" or "*caecitas est*", as identified by Aquinas with "*aliquid est privatum*."<sup>(7)</sup>

On the other hand, in propositions like "Joseph is not and Simeon is not," the 'is' is used in present actuality sense. Geach says, "We have here a sense of 'is' or 'exists' that seems to be certainly a genuine predicate of individuals; the sense of 'exist' in which one says that an

individual came to exist, still exists, no longer exists, etc.... Now it is this sense of 'is' or 'exists', the one found in C propositions [=“Joseph is not and Simeon is not”], that is relevant to Aquinas' term *esse*. This interpretation, I maintain, alone makes coherent sense of all that Aquinas says about *esse*.”<sup>(8)</sup>

Hermann Weidemann clearly follows Geach when he distinguishes “between two different existential uses of this verb, which we may, following Peter Geach, call its use in an *actuality* sense and its use in a *there-is* sense, respectively.”<sup>(9)</sup> Anthony Kenny is also influenced by Geach when he puts at the top of his list of twelve senses of the verb 'to be' in Aquinas those “two senses of '*esse*' which correspond to the word 'exist', i.e. '*specific existence*' and '*individual existence*.’”<sup>(10)</sup>

In contrast, Brian Davies takes an opposite position<sup>(11)</sup>. According to him, Aquinas thinks that “Socrates is” doesn't mean in any sense “Socrates exists,” but “Socrates is by nature human”. Davies denies to '*est*' any sense in which it tells us anything about any individual.

In short, Geach, Weidemann, and Kenny give to '*est*' a sense in which it is predicated of individuals, while Davies doesn't.

Their opposition, however, is not so simple as it may appear. For Geach adds a complementary explanation that “Existence in sense C [= present actuality sense] is, according to Aquinas, always existence in respect of some form”<sup>(12)</sup>. This means that “Socrates is” in this sense refers back to “Socrates is at present actually a man.”<sup>(13)</sup> This view is found also in Weidemann<sup>(14)</sup> and Kenny<sup>(15)</sup>.

So Geach, Weidemann, and Kenny all think that existence predicated of an individual is existence in respect of a substantial form, so “*Socrates est*” refers back to, is in accord with, and equivalent to “*Socrates est [actu] homo*”. Certainly this interpretation can be documented by Aquinas' words “*quodlibet esse est secundum formam aliquam*” (*S.T.*, I, 5, 5, ad3). But this weakens their assertion that '*est*' has a sense of existence predicated of an individual, and consequently diminishes their difference from Davies. For it is because of the equivalence of “*Socrates*

*est*" to "Socrates is human" that Davies denies to '*est*' any sense of existence predicated of individuals.

After all Geach, Weidemann, Kenny, and Davies all think substantially of the same thing, i.e. the equivalence in Aquinas of the proposition "*Socrates est*" and "*Socrates est [actu] homo*". Then what's their difference?

They differ in this: what Geach and Weidemann positively call 'existence'<sup>(16)</sup>, that is, the present actuality sense of 'is', Davies refuses to regard as existence. Kenny, though he calls it 'individual existence,' refuses to interpret it in the actuality sense<sup>(17)</sup>. Probably behind this there are different attitudes toward the modern logical concept of existence and predication and so toward the modern maxim 'existence is not a predicate'. Geach and Weidemann don't restrict the concept of existence to the logical one<sup>(18)</sup>, while Davies do<sup>(19)</sup>.

## Irrelevancy to Aquinas of regarding *ESSE* as 'existence'

Concerning this I would like to point out two things. First, the irrelevancy to Aquinas of calling his '*esse*' 'existence'. Secondly, the irrelevancy to Aquinas of the modern concept of predication.

There is a text where Aquinas identifies '*esse actu*' with '*formam uel actum actualiter inesse*'. He says:

[T2] *Expositio Libri Peryermerias*, I, 5 (1989, p.31, ll.395-404): nam '*est*' simpliciter dictum significat esse actu, et ideo significat per modum uerbi. Quia uero actualitas, quam principaliter significat hoc uerbum '*est*', est communiter actualitas omnis forme uel actus, substantialis uel accidentalis, inde est quod, cum uolumus significare quamcunque formam uel actum actualiter inesse alicui subiecto, significamus illud per hoc uerbum '*est*', simpliciter quidem secundum preuens tempus, secundum quid autem secundum alia tempora;

(tr.) for “is” said simply, signifies to be in act, and therefore signifies in the modes of a verb. However, the actuality which the verb “is” principally signifies is the actuality of every form or act commonly, whether substantial or accidental. Hence, when we wish to signify that any form or act actually inheres in some subject, we signify it through the verb “is,” either absolutely, according to present time, or relatively, according to other times;

This text, I presume, lies under Geach's interpretation. According to him, ‘*est*’ predicated of Socrates means *esse in rerum natura = actu esse = quamcunque formam uel actum actualiter inesse alicui subiecto*’ = existence in respect of a substantial form. Thus the ‘*est*’ predicated of Socrates means the existence of Socrates. But can we translate “*esse*” predicated of Socrates “existence” of Socrates in this context? I am doubtful that this interpretation is relevant to Aquinas, partly because of the fact that Aquinas himself doesn't use the Latin word ‘*existere*’ or ‘*existentia*’ when he analyses the meaning of this kind of propositions, partly because of the difference in Aquinas between the concept signified by “*esse*” and that by “*existere*” or “*existentia*”<sup>(20)</sup>.

It is not Aquinas, but Henry of Ghent who interprets “*est*” in “*Socrates est*” in terms of “*existere*” or “*existentia*”, which fact deserves more attention. Henry says,

(H1) *Summa quaestionum ordinarium*, a.21, q.3, Solutio [C-D] (Dallas Medieval Texts and Translation: Henry of Ghent's *Summa*; The Questions on God's Existence and Essence (Articles 21-24), by Jos Decorte and Roland J. Teske, S.J., Leuven, 2005, p.64-7): [C] ... Unde cum dicitur Socrates est, hoc quod est est, uno modo significat rem existere in actu et praedicat esse rei in seipsa, alio modo significat compositionem esse cum homine esse veram et praedicat esse rei in anima. [D] Quibus modis procedit illa communis distinctio propositionum quia propositio aut est de re aut de dicto. Est enim de re propositio ista, Socrates est, quando hoc verbum est copulat circa subiectum existentiam

eius absolute sub hoc sensu, Socrates est, id est, esse convenit Socrati. Est autem de dicto quando compositionem esse cum subiecto indicat esse veram sub hoc sensu, Socrates est, id est, Socratem esse est verum.

(tr.)[C] ... Hence, when it is said, "Socrates is," this "is" signifies in one way that the thing exists in act and predicates being of the thing itself, and in another way it signifies that the composition of "being" with "man" is true and predicates being of the thing in the soul. [D]In these ways there is that common distinction of propositions, namely, that a proposition is either about a thing or about a statement. For this proposition, "Socrates is", is about the thing when this verb "is" unconditionally joins to the subject its existence in the sense that "Socrates is" means that being pertains to Socrates. The proposition is about the statement when it indicates that the composition of being with the subject is true in the sense that "Socrates is" means that the statement that Socrates is is true.

Evidently in this text Henry of Ghent interprets (1) that "*est*" in "*Socrates est*" signifies that Socrates actually exists (*existere*), and (2) that it predicates existence (*existentia*) of Socrates himself<sup>(21)</sup>. Henry's interpretation of '*est*' in terms of '*existere*' and '*existentia*' should not be confused with that of Aquinas himself, which confusion might have taken place in the history of Thomistic tradition.

## Irrelevancy to Aquinas of the modern concept of predication

It is true, the modern maxim 'existence is not a predicate' is very influential. But naturally, Aquinas himself doesn't know anything about this theory. Even if it is true, it is irrelevant to Aquinas, for in Aquinas to predicate is to say and all that which is said of a subject is

predicated of it, as Gilson points out<sup>(22)</sup>. So the meaning of the concept of predication and predicability is different. On the other hand, if the slogan is taken in the sense in which the Latin word 'esse' as used by Aquinas does not predicate or say anything of an individual, it is certainly relevant to Aquinas but false. For he declares the predicability of 'est' of Socrates in T1.

So what is important to interpret Aquinas' assertion of the predicability of 'est' in T1 is not to squeeze his 'est' into a particular modern sense, nor throw away as a nonsense, but to interpret his words from a pragmatic point of view. In T1 Aquinas goes on to say "Socrates est," by which we intend to signify nothing other than that Socrates is in reality" (*«Sortes est», per quod nichil aliud intendimus significare quam quod Sortes sit in rerum natura*). He does not say 'significamus' but 'intendimus significare'. A little later in the same text he brings up the concept "the intention of the speaker" (*intentio loquentis*)<sup>(23)</sup>. So here Aquinas is not talking about a logical meaning of the term "esse" but a pragmatic use of it. When they say, "Socrates est," they intend to say, "Socrates est in rerum natura." The intention of the speaker is not to predicate a property of existence of Socrates, but to posit Socrates in reality (cf. *De ente et essentia*, 1: *aliquid in re ponit*). So "intendimus significare" is equivalent to "intendimus [Socratem] in re ponere". In T1, which is a key text concerning the predicability of 'est' in Aquinas, it is pragmatics that he is engaged in, not semantics, let alone formal semantics.

This doesn't imply that Aquinas is never interested in semantics of 'esse'. On the contrary it is systematically described in a series of texts beginning with the formula "esse (ens) dupliciter dicitur"<sup>(24)</sup>. But again it is important to note that these texts are not relevant to the terms 'existere' and 'existentia', but to the semantic dichotomy of 'esse' and 'ens'. Here are typical texts:

[T3]S.T., I, 3, 4, ad2: ... esse dupliciter dicitur: uno modo significat actum essendi; alio modo significat compositionem propositionis, quam anima adinvenit coniungens



*praedicatum subiecto. — Primo igitur modo accipiendo esse, non possumus scire esse Dei sicut nec eius essentiam, sed solum secundo modo. Scimus enim, quod haec propositio quam formamus de Deo, cum dicimus “Deus est”, vera est. Et hoc scimus ex eius effectibus, ut supra dictum est.*

[T4]S.T., I, 48, 2, ad2: *Ad secundum dicendum quod sicut dicitur in V. Metaphysicorum, ens dupliciter dicitur. Uno modo, secundum quod significat entitatem rei, prout dividitur per decem praedicamenta: et sic convertitur cum re. Et hoc modo nulla privatio est ens: unde nec malum. Alio modo dicitur ens, quod significat veritatem propositionis, quae in compositione consistit, cuius nota est hoc verbum ‘est’: et hoc est ens quo respondetur ad quaestionem ‘an est’. Et sic caecitatem dicimus esse in oculo, vel quancumque aliam privationem. Et hoc modo etiam malum dicitur ens.*

In these texts and others concerning the terms ‘esse’ and ‘ens’ Aquinas distinguishes between two modes of signifying and so two levels of signification resulted from them. In my view those texts are not concerned with the ontological dichotomy, as Veres asserts<sup>(25)</sup>, nor with the mere distinction of two senses, as Geach and his followers might think, but the semantic dichotomy of the two semantic levels of signification of the words ‘esse’, and ‘ens’, that is, something without the semantic world and something within it.

(A) Concerning the first level of signification, the verb “significare” in these texts is sometimes used to mean “refer to something in reality” (*secundum quod eius significatio refertur ad rem*)<sup>(26)</sup>, or “posit something in reality” (*aliquid in re ponere*).

(1) So the word ‘ens’ is used to refer to *aliquid*<sup>(27)</sup>, *essentia rerum/rei*<sup>(28)</sup>, *entitas rei*<sup>(29)</sup>, or *natura decem generum*<sup>(30)</sup>. What is common to all is ‘that which is divided by ten categories’ (*quod dividitur per decem genera*). So ‘ens’ as a noun is used to refer to one of ten categories.

(2) Secondly, the word ‘esse’ as a verb is used to refer to *actus essentiae*<sup>(31)</sup>, *actus entis*<sup>(32)</sup>, *actus essendi*<sup>(33)</sup>. What is common to all is *actus*.

So the relation of 'esse' to 'ens' is that 'esse' refers to *actus* of *ens*, *essentia*, *entitas*, *natura* or whatever, which is referred to by 'ens'. Thus if the proposition "*Socrates est*" is true, the term '*Socrates*' (= '*id quod est*' = 'ens') refers to his essence, his individualized humanity and the term '*est*' (= 'esse') refers to his act as a human being.

(B) Concerning the second level of signification, that is, something within the semantic world, the verb "*significare*" is actually used in three ways: (1) "form a proposition or judgement" (*significare compositionem propositionis*)<sup>(34)</sup>, (2) "assert truth" (*significare veritatem*)<sup>(35)</sup>, and (3) "affirm that a particular concept is instantiated" (*respondetur ad quaestionem 'an est'*)<sup>(36)</sup>. So "*esse*" in the first use of "*significare*" plays a pragmatic function of propositional act, in the second also plays a pragmatic function of truth assertion, and in the third plays the same logical semantic function as the existential quantifier. Scholars tend to select any one or two particular signification of "*esse*" or "*ens*" as vital, but Aquinas himself has such a perspective of semantic dichotomy as described above.

## Concluding remarks

1. When Aquinas says that '*est*' is predicated in "*Socrates est*", he doesn't intend to mean that a property of existence is attributed to Socrates, but that by the statement we intend to signify, that is, posit Socrates in reality. So Aquinas is here not talking about the sense or the logical meaning of the word '*est*', but about the pragmatic use of it.
2. Modern scholars, such as Gilson, Geach, Weidemann, Kenny, and Davies, pick out one or two senses of '*esse*' in Aquinas, translate it into 'existence' or squeeze it into the concept of existence in its modern sense. But this kind of things are irrelevant to Aquinas himself. For
3. Aquinas doesn't even use the term '*existere*' or '*existentia*' when he

- talks about the nature of existential propositions and
4. Aquinas has a system of the semantic dichotomy of 'esse' and 'ens', whose meanings can't be fully systematically understood except in terms of this viewpoint of the semantic dichotomy.

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- (1) Cf L-M. Régis, "Gilson's *Being and Some Philosophers*", *The Modern Schoolman* 28-2, 1951, pp.121-127 [p.123]: "The truth, in Thomism, is that the verb is the predicate par excellence: ... Now, in existential propositions, the verb 'to be' is predicated per se..."; R. M. McInerny, "Some Notes on Being and Predication", *The Thomist* 22-3, 1959, pp.315-335 [p.317]: "From this passage it is clear that in 'Socrates is', is is the predicate; the existential proposition, like any other simple enunciation, is composed of a noun and a verb, a subject and a predicate. ... St. Thomas also notes the obvious signification of is in 'Socrates is': when we make such an assertion, we mean that Socrates is in rerum natura. It is important to stress that St. Thomas asserts (1) that existence is a predicate, and (2) that existence, is, signifies something. Both of these assertions have been denied in the interests of an existential interpretation of St. Thomas' doctrine."
- (2) A.J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, London, 1947, p.43: "when we ascribe an attribute to a thing, we covertly assert that it exists: so that if existence were itself an attribute, it would follow that all positive existential propositions were tautologies, and all negative existential propositions self-contradictory; and this is not the case."
- (3) E. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, Toronto, 1949, p.201: "If it is a question of saying *how* things are, many problems are liable to arise precisely because things *are* in many different ways. ... But when it comes to existence, everything is simple, for x either is or is not, and that is all that can be said about it. Existential judgements are meaningless unless they are meant to be true. If the proposition, "*Peter is,*" means anything, it means that a certain man, Peter by name, actually is, or exists. Is does not predicate anything, not even existence; it posits it, and such a proposition has no business to be quoted in formal logic, except as an example of a whole class of propositions

- which are not the business of the logician.”
- (4) E.Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Toronto, 1952, p.224: “It is both evident in itself and clear from the texts quoted by Fr. Régis that, in the thought and language of Saint Thomas Aquinas, existence can be predicated. But this does not imply that, in the modern sense of the word, *esse* is a ‘predicate.’ ... For if we tell them [= contemporary non-Tomists] that existence is a predicate, they will certainly understand that, according to Thomas Aquinas, actual existence, or *esse*, can be predicated of its essence as one more essential determination”.
- (5) *Ibid.*, p225: “Logically speaking, it could be said that *esse* inheres in the subject Socrates, but metaphysically speaking, it does not, because where there is no *esse* there is no Socrates. Granting that *est* is a logical denomination of Socrates as existing, the metaphysical status of the denominated still remains an open question. Among those who refuse the composition of essence and esse, quite a few have been misled precisely by the fact that their metaphysical inquiries were being conducted in terms of logic.”
- (6) G.E.M.Anscombe & P.T.Geach, *Three Philosophers*, Oxford, 1961, pp.90-91: “We may express the difference between the two senses of ‘is’ as follows: An individual may be said to ‘be’, meaning that it is at present actually existing; on the other hand, when we say that ‘there is’ an X (where ‘X’ goes proxy for a general term), we are saying concerning a kind or description of things, Xs, that there is at least one thing of that kind or description.”
- (7) P.T.Geach, “Form and Existence”, in *Aquinas: A collection of critical essays*, ed. by A. Kenny, London, 1969, pp.29-53 (also in P.T.Geach, *God and The Soul*, London, 1969, pp.42-64), pp.44-6: “The logical peculiarity of B propositions is that ‘an F exists’ does not attribute actuality to an F, but F-ness to something or other. Aquinas realizes the peculiarity of B propositions when he paraphrases ‘*malum est*’ or ‘*caecitas est*’ into ‘*aliquid est privatum*’ (S.T., I,48,2,ad2; S.C.G., III, 9) Moreover, the same logical status is expressly ascribed to “*Deus est*” (S.T., I,3,4,ad2). In “*Deus est*” we are not predicating something of God, but predicating the term ‘*Deus*’ itself, so that ‘*Deus est*’ means ‘something or other is God.’”
- (8) *Ibid.*, p.46-8
- (9) H.Weidemann, “The Logic of Being in Thomas Aquinas”, in *The Logic of Being: Historical Studies*, ed. by S.Knuutila and J.Hintikka, Dordrecht, 1986, pp.181-200 [p.182] (also in *Thomas Aquinas: Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. by B.Davies, Oxford, 2002, pp.77-95).
- (10) A.Kenny, *Aquinas on Being*, Oxford U.P., 2002, pp.189-90: 1. *Specific existence*, as in ‘there are extra-terrestrial intelligences’. This is the existence that philosophers since Kant have insisted ‘is not a predicate’ and which is

commonly rendered nowadays by the use of the quantifier, as in 'For some X, X is an extra-terrestrial intelligence.' Statement of being of this kind affirm that a particular concept is instantiated. 2. *Individual existence*, as in 'The King is no more' or as in Wordsworth's poem 'she lived unknown, and few could know/ when Lucy ceased to be.' This kind of being is a predicate, which belongs to individuals, who may come into and go out of existence. Statements of this kind of existence are tensed like other subject-predicate sentences. The Great Pyramid still exists, while the Pharos of Alexandria does not.

- (11) B.Davies, "Aquinas, God, and Being", *The Monist*, 80, 1997, pp.500-520 [p.510-12]: "What is it that Aquinas takes existence statements to be doing when they tell us something about an individual? One thing he does not take them to be doing is telling us that the something in question exists. ... according to Aquinas names like 'Socrates' or 'Plato' signify human nature as ascribable to certain individuals. *Hoc nomen 'Socrates' vel 'Plato[n]' significat naturam humanam secundum quod est in hac materia.* On Aquinas's account, saying *Socrates est* or *Plato[n] est* is not to inform people of a property of existence had by Socrates and Plato. It is to assert what Socrates and Plato are by nature, i.e., human. In short, Aquinas is perfectly alert to the dangers of saying that '\_\_\_ exist(s)' can serve to tell us anything about any object or individual."
- (12) "Existence in sense C is, according to Aquinas, always existence in respect of some form: *quodlibet esse est secundum formam aliquam* (S.T., I, 5, 5, ad3). For it is in this sense of 'exist' that we say a thing goes on existing; and for a thing to continue to exist is for it to be the same X over a period of time, when 'X' represents some *Begriffswort*; and this in turn means the persistence in an individual of the form expressed by the predicable expression 'X.'" (Geach, 1969, p.48)
- (13) Anscombe & Geach, 1961, p.91-2: "Similarly, there is no such thing as a thing's *just* going on existing; when we speak of this, we must always really be referring to some form or nature, X, such that for that thing to go on existing is for it to go on being X. (For a man to go on existing is for him to go on being a man — one and the same man; for a statue to go on existing is for it to go on being the same shape; etc.) *Esse*, therefore, is always related to some form or other; and any persistent *esse* is the continued existence of some individualized form."
- (14) Weidemann explains that the 'is' in "Socrates is" means that he is actualized as a man that he essentially is. Cf. H.Weidemann, "*Socrates est*/'There is no such thing as Pegasus' Zur Logik singularer Existenzaussagen nach Thomas von Aquin und W. Van Orman Quine", *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*,

- 86, 1979, SS.42-59 [S.53]: "Wird das Wort "est" in dem Satz "Socrates est" in dieser Bedeutung verwendet, so sagt es von Sokrates aus, daß er als der Mensch, der er seinem Wesen nach ist, verwicklicht ist." He says, "... to Aquinas's mind, it is only in accordance with a thing's essence or nature that actual being (or existence) belongs to a thing." (H.Weidemann, 1986, p.184).
- (15) Kenny describes 'individual existence' as 'substantial being'. Cf. A.Kenny, 2002, p.190: "Aquinas believed that in statements of individual existence, 'S is' was equivalent to 'S is P', where 'P' is a predicate in the Aristotelian category of substance: e.g. 'Lucy is no more' = 'Lucy is no longer a human being'. Hence individual existence can be, in Aquinas' scheme of things, identified with substantial being."
- (16) Geach: 'existence in respect of a substantial form'; Weidemann: 'actual being (or existence)'
- (17) Kenny identifies 'individual existence' with 'substantial being', but not with 'actual being'. (Kenny, 2002, pp.190-1)
- (18) Geach, 1961, pp.90-91: "Frege was clear as to this distinction, though he rightly had no special interest, as a mathematical logician, in assertions of present actuality. It is a great misfortune that Russell has dogmatically reiterated that the 'there is' sense of the 'substantive' verb 'to be' is the only one that logic can recognise as legitimate: for the other meaning — present actuality — is of enormous importance in philosophy, and only harm can be done by a Procrustean treatment which either squeezes assertion of present actuality into the 'there is' form or lops them off as non-sensical."
- (19) Kenny, 2002, p.195: Among the problems that we have identified with Aquinas' theory of *esse* the most fundamental is the failure to make a clear distinction between existence on the one hand, and being in its multiple forms on the other. In the history of philosophy this distinction was most sharply emphasized by Gottlob Frege, who taught us to distinguish, under pain of gross fallacy, between first-level concepts corresponding to predicates and second-level concepts corresponding to quantifiers.; Davies, 1997, p.506: "Now, says Frege, 'In this respect, existence is analogous to number. Affirmation on existence is in fact nothing but denial of the number nought.' And if Frege is right about number, that is correct. Indeed, we can strengthen the claim. For statements of existence are more than *analogous* to statements of number; they *are* statements of number."
- (20) Cf. Nijenhuis, J., "‘To Be’ or ‘To Exist’: That is the Question", *The Thomist*, vol.3, no.3, 1986, pp.353-394.
- (21) Henry's basic position on the relation of '*esse*', '*existere*' and '*existentia*' is that *res habet existere per esse existentiae*. cf. *Quod.I*, q.9: "Unde et quamquam

istud esse secundum reducitur ad praedicatum accidentis quia modum accidentis habet, non tamen rem accidentis dicit, quia non advenit ipsi iam praeexistenti, sed per ipsum [= esse existentiae], ut dictum est, habet res existere. Unde participatio huius esse non dicitur extrinseca per inhaerentiam sicut participatio veri accidentis, sed per creationis impressionem, ut dictum est.”

- (22) E. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Toronto, 1952, p.224
- (23) In T2 also, Aquinas does not say ‘*significamus*’ but ‘*volumus significare*’. (cum uolumus significare quamcunque formam uel actum actualiter inesse alicui subiecto.)
- (24) cf. *De ente et essentia*, 1; *In I Sent.*, 19,5,1,ad1; *In I Sent.*, 33, 1, 1, ad1; *In II Sent.*,34, 1,1,c; *In II Sent.*, 37,1,2,ad3; *In III Sent.*, 6,2,2,c; S.C.G., III, 9; *De potentia*, VII, 2, ad1; *Quod.IX*, 2, 2, c; S.T., I, 3, 4, ad2 [= T3]; S.T., I, 48, 2, ad2 [= T4]; *De malo*, I, 1, ad19.
- (25) T.Verés, “Eine fundamentale ontologische Dichotomie im Denken des Thomas von Aquin”, *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, 77, 1970, pp..81-98 [p.82]: Unsere These lautet: Das ens ut actus essendi bedeutet das Seiende, d.h. jedes einzelne Seiende und die Gesamtheit des Seienden als dem endlichen Geist des Menschen (*animae humanae*) verborgene und unvergängliche Fülle des Seins, während das ens ut verum bedeutet: Dasselbe Seiende, sofern es dem menschlichen Geist offenbar und denkbar ist. Those words are sometimes used to say something of a thing, and at other times say something of a linguistic expression itself. This distinction is known to Aquinas, by the expression “*formaliter, secundum quod eius significatio refertur ad rem*”, and that “*secundum quod materialiter significat ipsam vocem*.” cf. *Expositio Libri Peryermenias*, I, 5 (1989, p.26, ll.73-82). In medieval logic this distinction is called that of “*suppositio formalis*” and “*suppositio materialis*”. Verés, ignoring the distinction, interprets those texts as dealing with the ontological dichotomy, so that he is involved in a serious difficulty. For he cannot explain why as a subject of the expression ‘*dupliciter dicitur*’ Aquinas uses ‘*esse*’ in some texts, ‘*ens*’ in others, and ‘*esse et ens*’ in others, while in ontology to be (*esse*) and a being (*ens*) should be clearly distinguished. T.Verés says “it appears to us here impossible to explain this abnormal fact of terminology” (Verés, 1970, p.84, n.13: Es erscheint uns hier unmöglich, diesen für uns ungewöhnlichen terminologischen Tatbestand zu erklären). It is “abnormal” because we usually think and say differently of a being (*ens*) and to be (*esse*). His inability to explain this “abnormal” fact is simply because of his interpretation of the dichotomy as ontological. What Aquinas talking about here is not *ens* or *esse* in reality, but modes of signification of the terms “*ens*” and “*esse*”. This can be seen from the expression “*uno modo significat ... alio*

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*modo significat ...*". In other words the dichotomy of esse or ens in these texts is not ontological, but semantic.

- (26) cf. *Expositio Libri Peryermeias*, I, 5 (1989, p.26, ll.73-82)
- (27) cf. *De ente et essentia*, 1; *In II Sent.*,34,1,1,c.
- (28) cf. *In I Sent.*, 19,5,1,ad1; *In II Sent.*, 37,1,2,ad3; S.C.G., III, 9; *De potentia*, VII, 2, ad1.
- (29) cf. S.T., I, 48, 2, ad2 [=T4].
- (30) cf. *De malo*, I, 1, ad19.
- (31) cf. *In I Sent.*, 33, 1, 1, ad1.
- (32) cf. *In III Sent.*, 6,2,2,c; *Quod.IX*, 2, 2, c.
- (33) cf. S.T., I, 3, 4, ad2 [=T3].
- (34) Cf. *In I Sent.*, 19,5,1,ad1; *In II Sent.*,34,1,1,c; *Quod.IX*, 2, 2, c; S.T., I, 3, 4, ad2.
- (35) cf. *De ente et essentia*, 1; *In I Sent.*, 33, 1, 1, ad1; *In II Sent.*,34,1,1,c; *In II Sent.*, 37,1,2,ad3; *In III Sent.*, 6,2,2,c; S.C.G., III, 9; *De potentia*, VII, 2, ad1; S.T., I, 48, 2, ad2.
- (36) *In II Sent.*,34,1,1,c; S.T., I, 48, 2, ad2; *De malo*, I, 1, ad19