

Angelic Mental Acts and Universal Hylomorphism in Some Early 14th-Century Franciscans

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Authors (OFM, fl. ca. 1300–1330) discussing the question:

Alexander of Alexandria (*Sent.* II, d. 3, qq. 1–3, early redaction only), **Peter Auriol** (*Sent.* II, d. 3, qq. 1–4), Aurifreio Gonteri Brito (*Sent.* II, d. 3, q. 2), Landulfus Caracciolo (*Sent.* II, d. 3, pars 1, q. 2), Robert Cowton (*Sent.* II, d. 3, q. 2, short), Francis of Marchia (*Sent.* II, q. 13), Hugh of Novum Castrum (*Sent.* II, d. 3, q. 4), **early Scotus** (*Q. De anima*, q. 15), **Gonsalvo of Spain** (*Q. disp.* q. 11), **Peter of Trabes** (*Sent.* II, d. 3, qq. 1–4), William of Ware (*Sent.* II, d. 3).

SPIRITUAL MATTER

1. “I say that in a probable way it can be said that there is matter in the soul, both according to the principles of the Philosopher, and of those who posit the opposite.”
2. “Every creature is matter, or has matter, so that matter is so much in corporeal things as in incorporeal things.”
3. “I say that...I do not see a major force in either part of this question, because the philosophers and saints who most diligently investigated about their natures, explicitly meant that they were composite of matter and form. And thus I hold [that] with them...”
4. “About this question, there are two views. For some deny that angels and any spiritual substances have matter, for the reason of intellectuality and incorporeity.... But they posit that the angels are composed of essence and existence, in the way it was said in the previous question. But this view, regarding both of its parts, seems to posit falsity.

Scotus, *Quaestiones super De Anima*, q. 15 (*OPh* 5:131): Respondeo quod probabiliter potest dici quod in anima est materia, et secundum fundamenta PHILOSOPHI et eorum qui ponunt contrarium.

Gonsalvo, *Disp. quest.*, q. 11 (ed. Amorós, 204): [O]mne creatum est materia aut materiam habens, ita quod materia sit tam in rebus corporalibus quam in incorporeis.

Auriol, *In Sent.* II, d. 3, q. 1, a. 3 (Paris 1605, 59): Dico autem, quod...non video magnum robur in aliqua parte istius quaestionis, tum quia Philosophi et Sancti qui diligissime investigarunt de naturis istorum, expresse intellexerunt quod essent compositae ex materia et forma. Ideo teneo cum eis...

Peter of Trabes, *In Sent.* II, d. 3, a. 1, q. 2 (transcr. R. Friedman): Circa istam quaestionem duplex est opinio. Quidam enim...negant angelum et omnem substantiam spirituales materiam habere, et hoc propter rationem intellectuality et propter rationem incorporeitatis.... Ponunt tamen angelum compositum ex essentia et esse, modo illo quo dictum est in quaestione praedicta. Sed haec positio quantum ad utramque suam partem videtur ponere falsitatem.

THE ARGUMENT FROM PASSIBILITY

5. “[J]ust as being and acting shows forth form, so does potency and passion shows forth matter; but in angels and in the soul, there can be real passion.”
6. “From the immutability of God, the saints conclude his simplicity and immateriality, but from the mutability of a creature conclude that it has matter.”

Gonsalvo, *ibid.* (ed. Amorós, 217): [S]icut esse et agere attestatur formae, ita potentia et passio attestatur materiae; sed in angelis et in anima potest esse vera passio.

P. of Trabes, *ibid.* (tr. RF): Ex immutabilitate enim Dei concludunt sancti eius simplicitatem et immaterialitatem, ex mutabilitate autem creaturae concludunt ipsam habere materiam.

THE ARGUMENT FROM ACT AND POTENCY

7. “If in any genus, there are common and really distinct principles – not just appropriated ones – , then everything falling in that genus must be composed of those; but matter and form are such principles in the genus of substance. Proof: act and potency are the most common principle in any genus; but act, in the genus of substance, is form, and potency in the same genus is matter; therefore, matter and form are the most common principles in the genus of substance. . . . Therefore, since an angel is a species of [the genus of] substance, it is composed of [matter and form].”

Scotus, *ibid.* (*OPh* 5:134): [Q]uia in quocumque genere sunt principia communia – non tantum appropriata – et realiter distincta, oportet omnia illius generis esse ex eis composita; materia et forma sunt talia principia in genere substantiae. Probatio: actus et potentia sunt principia communissima in quolibet genere; actus autem in genere substantiae est forma, potentia in eodem genere est materia; igitur materia et forma sunt principia communissima in genere substantiae. . . . Igitur cum angelus sit species substantiae, est ex eis compositus.

THE ARGUMENT FROM PROPER CHARACTERISTICS

8. “Sub-standing and subsisting first and *per se* and principally belongs to matter, according to what Aristotle shows in *Metaphysics* VII, by this argument: that which sub-stands others, subsists, and nothing else has more of a nature of a substance. But matter is what sub-stands everything else, for it sub-stands form and by the mediation of form, the accidents, but there is nothing that would sub-stand *it*; therefore, matter has the most the nature of a substance. Therefore, to whatever belongs the nature of subsisting, it belongs to it by matter, since sub-standing or subsisting is said about the other things by attribution. . . . Since therefore it is manifest that angels sub-stand some accidents, it is necessary that angels have matter.”

P. of Trabes, *ibid.* (tr. RF): [S]ubstare sive subsistere primo et per se et principaliter convenit materiae secundum quod probat Aristoteles, VII Metaphysicae, tali ratione: illud quod substat aliis subsistit et ei nihil habet magis rationem substantiae. Sed materia est quae substat omnibus aliis, substat enim formae et mediante forma accidentibus, sibi autem omnino nihil substat; ergo materia magis habet rationem substantiae. Ergo cuicumque convenit ratio subsistendi, convenit ei per materiam cum substat sive subsistere dicatur de aliis per attributionem. . . . Cum ergo manifestum sit angelum quibusdam accidentibus subsistere, necesse est angelum materiam habere.

THE ARGUMENT FROM INDIVIDUALITY

9. “I respond that we can probably say that there is matter in the soul, both because of the principles of the Philosopher, and of those who maintain the opposite. One of these [principles] is that a plurality of individuals in one species requires matter in those individuals.”

Scotus, *ibid.* (*OPh* 5:131): Respondeo quod probabiliter potest dici quod in anima est materia, et secundum fundamenta PHILOSOPHI et eorum qui ponunt contrarium. Quorum unum est quod pluralitas individuorum in una specie requirit materiam in illis individuis.

MATTER UNIFORM

10. “[O]f those maintaining this opinion, some say that matter is of a different nature in those three kinds of things, because of their intransmutability to one another; and some say that in everything there is [matter] of the same nature and the same, which seems to me more probable.”
11. “You do not say them to be of different natures except if one were more perfect and more noble than the other; but the spiritual is the more noble than the corporeal; thus, it is either more noble in potentiality, or in actuality. But if in actuality, then it is not prime matter, because that does not have any actuality; if in potentiality, then it is more *imperfect*. . . because the more potentiality [makes something] more imperfect.”

Gonsalvo, *ibid.* (ed. Amorós, 204): Sed de numero istam opinionem tenentium, quidam dicunt quod materia est alterius rationis in isto triplici gradu entium propter eorum intransmutabilitatem ad invicem; quidam vero quod in omnibus sit unius rationis et eiusdem, quae videtur mihi probabilior

Scotus, *ibid.* (*OPh* 5:136): [N]on diceret eas diversarum rationum nisi una esset perfectior et nobilior alia; sed spiritualis est nobilior corporeali; aut igitur est nobilior in potentialitate, aut in actualitate. Si in actualitate, igitur non est materia prima, quia nihil actualitatis habet; si in potentialitate, igitur est imperfectior. . . quia potentialius est imperfectius.

12. “Now, the diversity of prime matter is caused neither by the diversity of composites, nor by [that of] the forms – the prime matter, which is in the composites and under specifically different forms in the same way; therefore, neither is the diversity of matter caused by the diverse way of receiving the form or the composite, as dissolubly or indissolubly, according to transmutation or without transmutation. And consequently, prime matter is the of the same nature in corruptibles and incorruptibles.”

MATTER DIVERSE

13. “[T]he matter of corporeal things, according to its essence, has extension, while the matter of spiritual things, according to its essence, lacks extension.”
14. “As the whole genus of sensible things differs from the whole genus of intelligible things, so does this [corporeal] matter differ from that [spiritual] one.”
15. “The aforementioned reasoning of the position, without doubt, posits something false, namely that matter in itself does not have actuality, but all its actuality is from the form, and because of this it cannot have any distinction except by the form. For this is false, because all essences, necessarily, have some actuality, a complete essence complete [actuality], and an incomplete [essence] incomplete [actuality].”

Gonsalvo, *ibid.* (ed. Amorós, 220): Nunc autem, nec ex diversitate compositorum nec formarum causatur diversitas materiae primae quin unius rationis sit in compositis et sub formis differentibus specie; ergo nec ex diverso modo percipiendi formam vel compositum, ut dissolubiliter vel indissolubiliter, secundum transmutationem sive sine transmutatione, causabitur diversitas materiae, et per consequens materia prima erit unius rationis in corruptibilibus et in incorruptibilibus.

P. of Trabes, *ibid.* (tr. RF): materia corporalium secundum suam essentiam habeat extensionem, materia autem spiritualium secundum suam essentiam extensione careat.

Auriol, *ibid.* (Paris 1605, 57): [S]icut totum genus sensibile differt a toto genere intelligibile, sic haec materia ab illa.

P. of Trabes, *ibid.* (tr. RF): Ratio autem praedictae positionis indubitanter ponit falsum, scilicet quod materia de se non habeat actualitatem, sed tota eius actualitas sit a forma, ac per hoc nec aliquam possit habere distinctionem nisi a forma. Hoc enim est falsum, quia omnis essentia necessario habet aliquam actualitatem, completa completam, incompleta incompletam.