

A Trace of Similarity within Even Greater Dissimilarity

Thomistic Foundations of Erich Przywara's
Teaching on Analogy

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ABSTRACT This article readdresses the Przywara-Barth controversy concerning *analogia entis*. The main point of our analysis is the question of whether the concept of analogy presented by Erich Przywara was in line with the classical Aristotelian-Thomistic definition and use of analogy in theistic predication. First, we ask about Przywara's strong conviction that analogy is primarily a metaphysical and not merely a grammatical doctrine. Secondly, after presenting the complexity of Aquinas' notion of analogy, as well as the variety of opinions on this subject among his commentators, we analyze (1) the objectives of Przywara's view of *analogia entis*, (2) his grounding it in the terminology taken from the typology offered by Cajetan and juxtaposing *analogia proportionalitatis* and *analogia attributionis*, and (3) his introduction of the concept of "a new 'attributive analogy'" proceeding from above to below and sustaining the tension within *analogia entis*. We show that Przywara remained a faithful student and interpreter of Thomas, where this makes Barth's accusation that the Catholic doctrine of *analogia entis* puts God and creatures on a common plane of being unjustified.

KEYWORDS *analogia entis*; analogy of attribution; analogy of being; analogy of proportion; analogy of proportionality; Aquinas, Thomas; Barth, Karl; immanence; Przywara, Erich; transcendence

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Man reaches the highest point of his knowledge about God when he knows that he knows Him not, inasmuch as he knows that which is God transcends whatever he conceives of Him.¹

INTRODUCTION: DELINEATING THE PRZYWARA-BARTH CONTROVERSY

One of the most basic linguistic tools in theistic predication is analogy. Although many would agree with this assertion, it is by no means easy to unify the views of the philosophers of religion, and the theologians, engaged in trying to define and classify the different types of analogy used in theology. The diversity of opinions becomes even more apparent when we compare Catholic and Protestant traditions.

The research presented in this article is inspired by the controversy between the most prolific and influential Calvinist theologian of the twentieth century, Karl Barth, and his philosophical and theological interlocutor, Erich Przywara. As is well known, the disagreement between these two important thinkers concerns the notion of analogy that would be most appropriate in the theological predication of the relationship between God and the world (*analogia entis* versus *analogia fidei* and *analogia relationis*). It is also known that the positions of Barth and Przywara in this matter had consequences for the ecumenical dialogue between the new Protestant orthodoxy and the Catholic Church in the twentieth century. For what was at stake in the Przywara-Barth controversy was Barth's criticism and rejection of not merely the thought of a particular Catholic theologian, but of Catholic theology in general. And rightly so, as Przywara's ambition was to present not only his personal opinion concerning the principles of theological predication, but the classical Thomistic view of analogy that had inspired generations of theologians and served as a litmus test of the Catholic orthodoxy, protecting it from the errors of pantheism, panentheism and occasionalism on the one hand, and of deism and agnosticism on the other.²

1. Thomas Aquinas *De potentia*, 7, 5, ad 14. References to all works of Aquinas cited and quoted in this article can be found in Bibliography.

2. Panentheism assumes that the world is in God, who—at the same time—transcends it. It is usually accompanied by a theology of divine limitation. Having its roots in religious traditions of the Ancient East and Platonism and Neoplatonism, redefined within the context of German idealism of Karl Krause, Schelling and Hegel, it is gaining popularity within contemporary theology in both Western and Eastern traditions. See John Culp, "Panentheism," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2016 edition <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/panentheism/>; John W. Cooper, *Panentheism—The Other God of the Philosophers: From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, MI: Baker Academic, 2006).

The debate surrounding the Przywara-Barth controversy goes back to the first half of the twentieth century, and the opinion of Gottlieb Söhnngen, who claimed that *analogia entis* and *analogia fidei* are complementary rather than mutually exclusive, and that Barth's *analogia fidei* necessarily implies an *analogia entis*.³ The opinion of von Balthasar, expressed in a series of essays and summarized later in his *The Theology of Karl Barth*, was similar. He asserted that Barth's theology operates under the same assumptions that underlie the *analogia entis*: i.e. that God's action in creation presupposes his act of reconciliation in Christ.⁴

The next stage of the same debate introduces two important positions, presented in Battista Mondin's *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology* and Henri Chavannes' *The Analogy Between God and the World in Saint Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth*—both of them striving to show that the gap between Barth's and Aquinas' respective stances on the subject of analogy is not unbridgeable.⁵

The latest development of the conversation with regard to the Przywara-Barth controversy has introduced several important new arguments. These include, *inter alia*, the following: (i) Archie Spencer's claim that Barth's rejection of *analogia entis*—despite his apparent misunderstanding of Przywara—was consistent, and Thomas Joseph White's critical response to this assertion; (ii) David Bentley Hart's strong criticism of Barth in his *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth*, where he finds Barth's rejection of *analogia entis* to be a "barbarous" act, that is "nothing but an example of inane (and cruel) invective," as well as something that "speaks only of Barth's failure to understand Przywara"; (iii) Keith L. Johnson's opinion that Barth, for the right reasons, never

3. See Gottlieb Söhnngen, "Analogia Fidei: Gottähnlichkeit allein aus Glauben?," *Catholica* 3, no. 3 (1934): 113–36; and Gottlieb Söhnngen, "Analogia Fidei: Die Einheit in der Glaubenswissenschaft," *Catholica* 3, no. 4 (1934): 176–208.

4. See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, 3rd edition (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992).

5. See Battista Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1968); and Henry Chavannes, *The Analogy Between God and the World in Saint Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth* (New York: Vantage Press, 1992). Mondin claims that Barth might have addressed his categorical "Nein!" primarily to the liberal Protestantism in which he himself grew up and which he rejected, rather than to Catholicism. He contends: "[Barth's] criticism has weight only against those deistic philosophers of the eighteenth century and those liberal theologians of the nineteenth century who, in attempting to establish the harmony of reason and faith, interpreted the divine-human relation in such a way as to destroy the supernatural, external revelation and dogmas implying mysteries, and to make reason the touchstone of religious validity" (Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy*, 169).

changed his view on analogy; and (iv) the noteworthy collection of articles in the volume edited by Thomas J. White. The latter brings into the discussion important voices coming from Bruce L. McCormack, Richard Schenk, Peter Casarella, and John R. Betz, to whose article and “Translator’s Introduction” to the English edition of Przywara’s *Analogia Entis* we shall be referring in due course.⁶

The main point of our analysis is the question of the extent to which the concept of analogy presented by Erich Przywara represents faithfully the classical Aristotelian-Thomistic definition and use of analogy in theistic predication. At least two important queries can be raised in this regard. First, Przywara gives his concept of analogy the name *analogia entis*, which suggests it is primarily a metaphysical and not merely a grammatical doctrine. In other words, he sees it as a matter of participation, and not merely of predication. As is well known, opinions of different Thomists in this matter vary. Hence, it seems reasonable to ask to what extent Przywara’s position on this fundamental issue reflects the original thought of Aquinas.

Secondly, assuming that Przywara is right in treating analogy as a metaphysical doctrine, then it is by no means uncontroversial that he reintroduces it under the name *analogia entis*, which Aquinas himself never used. The term in question appeared for the first time in the controversial typology of different kinds of analogy in Aquinas, proposed by Cardinal Cajetan in the sixteenth century. This typology led to the division between those who claim that the only type of analogy Aquinas accepts in theology is the analogy of proportionality (*analogia proportionalitatis*), and those who think that he would rather define it as the analogy of attribution (*analogia attributionis*). As is well known, Przywara brings these two types of analogy together, introducing—at the same time—the concept of “a new ‘attributive analogy,’” proceeding from above to below and sustaining the tension within *analogia entis*. The question arises whether his view is faithful to the teachings of Thomas.

6. See, respectively, (i) Archie Spencer, “Causality and the Analogia Entis: Karl Barth’s Rejection of Analogy of Being Reconsidered,” *Nova et Vetera* 6 (2008): 329–76; and Thomas White, “How Barth Got Aquinas Wrong: A Reply to Archie J. Spencer on Causality and Christocentrism,” *Nova et Vetera* 7 (2009): 241–270; (ii) David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 241; (iii) Keith L. Johnson, *Karl Barth and the Analogia Entis* (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2010); (iv) John R. Betz, *The Analogy of Being: Invention of the Antichrist or the Wisdom of God?*, edited by Thomas Joseph White OP, 35–87. Grand Rapids, MI / Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011.

An attempt at answering these queries naturally takes us back to the thought of Aquinas, where this in turn obliges us to confront the fact that he does not present us with one consistent theory of analogy. What we encounter in his works are numerous examples of using analogy, but no systematic classification of the types or modes of analogical predication of God in his relation to creatures. This generates unavoidable ambiguities among scholars trying to reconstruct Aquinas' thought in this matter. Aware of these difficulties, we shall, nonetheless, try to answer both questions concerning Przywara's notion of *analogia entis*. We shall proceed in the way outlined below.

First, addressing the question of whether Przywara was right in defining the concept of analogy as primarily a metaphysical doctrine, we will briefly refer to the position of Philip Darley, who offers—in our opinion—a balanced assessment of the debate and a reliable view of how Aquinas would answer the “predication or participation” query concerning his notion of analogy. The second section will concentrate on the analysis of Aquinas' view of analogy, and our constructive proposal of how he would define and understand the concept of *analogia entis*. In the third section, we shall (after having introduced it in the first section) briefly revisit Cajetan's division into various types of analogy, this time in the context of the opinions of those who favored either *analogia proportionalitatis* or *analogia attributionis* as the only type of analogy proper for the language of theology. This will complete the sketch of the background needed for our assessment of Przywara's view of *analogia entis* and its faithfulness to Aquinas' original teaching on analogy, which will be offered, in turn, in the fourth section. The article ends with a re-evaluation of the Przywara-Barth controversy in terms of the question of whether Barth—based on his reading of Przywara—had a rational justification for claiming that the Catholic doctrine of *analogia entis* puts God and His creatures on a common plane of being.

1. PREDICATION OR PARTICIPATION?

It was by no means accidental that Przywara gave to his notion of analogy the name *analogia entis*. Without doubt, he understood it as primarily a metaphysical and not just a grammatical doctrine. He clearly thought that its objectives were not simply a matter of predication (i.e. regarding the order of knowing—*ordo cognoscendi*), but also, and primarily, one of participation (i.e. regarding the order of being—*ordo essendi*). This strong conviction was decisive for his entire project, which he hoped would suc-

cessfully address the cultural and theological crisis of his time. Moreover, Przywara was also convinced that his position remained faithful to the teaching of Thomas Aquinas, accurately transmitting and explaining his thought in the context of twentieth century philosophy and theology. But we may well ask whether the latter is true as regards the very nature of Aquinas' doctrine of analogy. Did he really consider it to be, in the main, a metaphysical doctrine? Alan Philip Darley offers a balanced assessment of the debate on this issue—one which is certainly worth invoking and summarizing here.⁷

The two main interlocutors whose views Darley contrasts in his analysis are Cajetan and Ralph McInerny. Cajetan, in reference to *In Sententiarum*, (hereinafter abbreviated as *In Sent.*) I, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1, famously introduces three types of analogy: (I) analogies of inequality, (II) analogies of attribution, and (III) analogies of proportionality, of which the first is not really an analogy at all, since the elements of the analogy (“analogates”) that it juxtaposes (e.g., celestial and terrestrial bodies) are equivocal from a metaphysical point of view, but univocal from an abstract, logical one. Modern commentators may disagree on Cajetan's opinion concerning the nature of attribution and his conviction that proportionality is the main, or only “true,” type of analogy in Aquinas, but they are usually in no doubt about the fact that he sees analogy as a doctrine that is primarily metaphysical.⁸

McInerny, on the other hand, argues that Cajetan's view is a lapse in Thomistic interpretation of analogy, which he thinks is a grammatical term, indifferent to the reality of its referents—an “unequal, ranked, ordered arrangement” that is principally intentional and refers to real entities only coincidentally.⁹ In other words, for McInerny there is no such thing as an analogy of being. He claims that while Aristotle used analogy to refer to things arranged according to the priority of nature, Aquinas uses it in the purely semantic sense of an order obtaining amongst the various meanings of the common term. This is why he never refers to it as an “analogy of being.”¹⁰

7. See Alan Philip Darley, “Predication or Participation? What Is the Nature of Aquinas' Doctrine of Analogy?,” *Heythrop Journal* 57, no. 2 (2016): 312–324, doi:10.1111/heyj.12321.

8. Contrary to this view, Gregory Rocca claims that Cajetan's view of analogy is merely conceptual, without a link to judgments predicated of actual subjects. See Gregory P. Rocca, *Speaking the Incomprehensible God: Thomas Aquinas on the Interplay of Positive and Negative Theology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), chapter 5.

9. See Ralph M. McInerny, *Being and Predication: Thomistic Interpretations* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1986), 281.

10. “Our ability to recognize a term as analogous is independent of any assertion as to

Darley agrees with McInerney that Aquinas does not use “types” of analogy (such as attribution and proportionality) in the way that Cajetan attributed to him. Neither does he deploy the term *analogia entis*. At the same time, with critical reference to David Burrell¹¹ (who, echoing the later Wittgenstein, saw *scientia divina* as a language game (“the grammar of Divinity”) and maintained its coherence character at the expense of real correspondence, saying that “properly speaking, nothing can be said of God”), Darley claims that McInerney’s approach leads to agnosticism.¹² In agreement with George Klubertanz, Gregory Rocca, Battista Mondin, Rudi A. te Velde, John Milbank and Catherine Pickstock,¹³ he states that

those who argue for analogy as participation recognize an important *relationship* between the two orders. Names stand for concepts in the mind that refer to things in the world. Human words (*modus significandi*) imperfectly signify real perfections in God (*res significata*), even to the extent that the Divine perfections are exemplars that human naming imitates. As Milbank puts it: “unless things themselves can be read as signs of God, names cannot be used analogically of God. The limits or unlimits of grammar reflect the limits or unlimits of the created order.”¹⁴

whether or not the *res significata* is intrinsic to all the analogates. Furthermore, it seems that when we do judge that the *res significata* is an intrinsic form of only one of the analogates, we are not thereby adding to what is meant by an analogous name. That is, these further judgments do not seem to me to be productive of type of analogous term” (ibid., 284). Similar is the view of McCabe, who, in his commentary in *Summa theologiae*, states: “Analogy is not a way of getting to know about God, nor is it a theory of the structure of the universe, it is a comment on our use of certain words.” Herbert McCabe, ed. and transl., *Summa theologiae*, vol. 3, *Knowing and Naming God* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), 106.

11. See David B. Burrell, *Aquinas: God and Action* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 5, 17, 25. In his introduction to Przywara’s *Analogia entis*, Betz notes that Burrell seems to have changed his opinion on this matter. See Betz, “Translator’s Introduction” in Erich Przywara *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics—Original Structure and Universal Rhythm*, trans. John R. Betz and David Bentley Hart (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014), 119.

12. See Darley, “Predication or Participation?,” 316.

13. See George Peter Klubertanz, *Thomas Aquinas on Analogy: A Textual Analysis and Systematic Synthesis* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1960), 114; Rocca, *Speaking the Incomprehensible God*, 164; Battista Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 65–6; Rudi A. te Velde, *Aquinas on God: The “Divine Science” of the Summa Theologiae* (Aldershot, Hants, U.K.: Ashgate, 2006), 99, 109; John Milbank and Catherine Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas* (London: Routledge, 2001), 43–51.

14. Darley, “Predication or Participation?,” 321. Darley refers to John Milbank and Catherine Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas*, 47. At the same point they add that “Without ontological guarantee . . . [analogy] . . . might be merely equivocal save for human delusion.”

Hence, although Thomas himself does not use the term, his *analogia* truly is *analogia entis*. Even if Darley is right when saying that the term “analogy of meaning” might be more appropriate for Aquinas’ position than “analogy of being,”¹⁵ the “meaning” in question is always rooted in the reality of what it speaks about, because for Thomas, logic participates in being. Analogy, in theology, has a metaphysical dimension that is indispensable to, and decisive for, its unique character and nature. It helps us not only to preserve religious language from univocity and equivocity, but also to describe the existing relation between the being of God and the being of creatures. The recovery of the importance of participation in Aquinas’ thought, which has been one of the major breakthroughs in the Thomistic scholarship in the twentieth century, is unquestionable. Hence, Przywara was certainly right in defining his notion of analogy as *analogia entis*.

Having said this, however, we are left with yet another and even more challenging query concerning the type of logic that is most appropriate in analogical reasoning. In other words, we need to ask which type of analogical predication is best for theology. Before we discuss Przywara’s opinion in this matter, we need to first analyze the thought of Aquinas (section 2) and of his commentators (section 3).

2. THOMAS AQUINAS ON MODES OF ANALOGICAL REASONING IN THEOLOGY
As with other important epistemological and metaphysical principles of Aquinas’ philosophy and theology, his teaching on analogy is grounded in the thought of Aristotle, who classified all terms used in predication into three groups according to the mode of signification. He spoke about univocal and equivocal names, and defined the third group as those terms “which do not differ by way of equivocalness.” This classification, mediated by Averroes, was rediscovered later by Alexander of Hales and introduced into scholastic theology. The terms classified between univocation and equivocation were called “analogous.”¹⁶

15. Ibid.

16. Aristotle, often called the “father of analogy,” offers at least two arguments that introduce this notion: (i) the argument from example (*paradeigma*)—found in *Rhetoric* II.24,1402b15; and in *Prior Analytics* II.14,69a1; and (ii) the argument from likeness (*homoiotes*)—found in *Topics* VIII.1, 156b10–17. He classifies analogy as one of four kinds of unity (numerical, specific, generic, and analogous) and uses it in science, ethics, logic and metaphysics, in order to describe relations between things whose qualities cannot be compared directly. For more information on this topic, see Paul Bartha, “Analogy and Analogical

Trying to find an appropriate terminology for theistic predication, Aquinas begins with an emphasis on God conceived as a single first principle: i.e. "being" in itself. Consequently, he sees Creation, sharing in the perfection of "being," as resembling God. Moreover, he realizes that unity, simplicity and other attributes of God can be designated by a single name. At the same time, however, he understands that as human beings we can only try to name God in reference to what we know about Him from Creation. That is why our predication of God develops through a multiplicity of names, none of which can capture His essence by itself.

Trying to define the nature of divine names, Aquinas finds the concept of analogy useful—it having been already established and applied in Aristotle's philosophy. However, it is not possible to point to a single clear definition of analogy in Aquinas' writings. Not only that, in the *Summa theologiae*, which is regarded as his most mature work, Aquinas mentions analogy only occasionally.¹⁷ Paradoxically, much more material on this can be found in his earlier works, in which he proposes various distinctions as regards analogical predication. Each one of these can be treated separately. What is more, in his classifications Thomas often uses the same examples to describe different kinds of analogy. But we should not think that this leads him into inconsistency, because analogy, as a logical concept, can be analyzed in many ways even when one is proceeding with reference to similar examples. In what follows we shall present a basic classification of the different types of analogy in Aquinas.

Reasoning," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2016 edition <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/reasoning-analogy/>, section 3.2; and Niels C. Nielsen, Jr., "Analogy and the Knowledge of God: An Ecumenical Appraisal," *Rice University Studies* 60, no. 1 (January 1974), 39–54. In the third section of his article Nielsen presents a historical survey on analogy referring to Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Augustine, Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure and Aquinas. See also Hampus Lyttkens, *The Analogy between God and the World: An Investigation of Its Background and Interpretation of Its Use by Thomas of Aquino* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1952), 15–163; David B. Burrell, *Analogy and Philosophical Language* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1973), 37–91; Ralph M. McInerney, *The Logic of Analogy: An Interpretation of St. Thomas* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961), 30–47; Roger M. White, *Talking about God: The Concept of Analogy and the Problem of Religious Language* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 11–72.

17. See *Summa theologiae* (hereinafter abbreviated as *ST*), translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benzinger Bros), 1946, I, q. 12, a. 1, ad 4; I, q. 13, a. 5, co.; I, q. 13, a. 10, co.; I, q. 16, a. 6. Rudi A. te Velde (*Aquinas on God*, 95–121) offers a very useful and informative commentary on *ST* I, q. 13.

2.1. *Divine Names and Analogy*

In the first part of his *Summa contra gentiles*¹⁸ searching for a proper language for theistic discourse, Thomas says that divine names, which we use when speaking about God, are neither univocal nor equivocal. On the one hand, because their meaning is based on our knowledge of creation, they cannot be univocal when predicated of God, who infinitely surpasses all that He created. On the other hand, if they were totally equivocal, we would understand nothing of God, as we know the meanings of divine names only by virtue of how they refer to creatures. Hence, Aquinas continues, divine names must be predicated of God analogously (see *Cont. Gent.* I, 32–34; *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5).

The first important type of analogy mentioned by Aquinas is the analogy of proportion, described both in *In Sententiarum* IV, d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, ad 6, and in *De veritate* (hereinafter abbreviated as *De ver.*) q. 2, a. 11, co., where Thomas says: “There is a certain agreement between things having a proportion to each other from the fact that they have a determinate distance between each other or some other relation to each other, like the proportion which the number two has to unity in as far as it is the double of unity.” Proportion is generally based on defined mathematical relations of quantity (for example, four being twice as much as two). When referring to things and objects, proportion describes mutual and determinate relations between them. Thomas gives here the example of substance and accident with respect to being, and the example of the term “healthy” when predicated of an animal and its urine.¹⁹ According to Aquinas this kind of analogy cannot be used to predicate anything of divine names, as it is impossible to define exactly the relation between the infinite God and finite creation. The distance between them is unlimited. Therefore, when we say, for instance, that God is good, we do not know what the exact relation is between God’s goodness and that of the creatures.²⁰

If our predication of God cannot be an example of proportion, maybe it is an example of proportionality? Unlike proportion, proportionality is

18. Thomas Aquinas *Summa contra gentiles* (hereinafter abbreviated as *Cont. Gent.*),

19. Thomas uses the example given by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* Γ.1, 1003a33–b18, which is based on medical knowledge of his time (the quality of urine was regarded an evidence of an animal’s healthiness).

20. “In those terms predicated according to the first type of analogy, there must be some definite relation between the things having something in common analogously. Consequently, nothing can be predicated analogously of God and creature according to this type of analogy; for no creature has such a relation to God that it could determine the divine perfection” (*De ver.* q. 2, a. 11, co.).

not based on a determinate relationship between entities we want to describe. It involves a comparison of two proportions or relations. To give an example, a “principle” might be said to be an analogical term when referring to a point and a spring from which water issues, because a spring is related to a stream as a point is related to a line:

$$[1] \quad \frac{\text{point}}{\text{line}} = \frac{\text{spring}}{\text{stream}}.^{21}$$

Thomas identifies two modes for this kind of predication when applied to God. First, there are certain names that we give Him, like “lion” or “sun.” In their primary meaning they refer to something in respect of which no similarity between God and creatures can be found. And yet, it seems appropriate to assert that what the lion is for all animals (i.e. a king), God is for all creatures, and what the sun is for the earth (i.e. the source of light and life), God is for the universe:

$$[2] \quad \frac{\text{lion}}{\text{all animals}} = \frac{\text{God}}{\text{all creatures}}, \quad [3] \quad \frac{\text{sun}}{\text{earth}} = \frac{\text{God}}{\text{universe}}.$$

In other words, proportionality justifies our using the name “king” as an analogical term when referring to the lion and to God, as well as the nominal expression “source of light and life” when this is applied to both the sun and to God. Thomas says that these names are symbolical or metaphorical. They are approved in theology, as long as we remember and acknowledge their limitations. Following Cajetan’s typology, we may call this kind of predication the analogy of improper proportionality.²²

21. In *De ver.* q. 2, a. 11, co., Thomas gives a mathematical example of proportionality, as distinguished from proportion: “The agreement is occasionally noted not between two things which have a proportion between them, but rather between two related proportions—for example, six has something in common with four because six is two times three, just as four is two times two.” Another example he gives refers to analogous predication of “sight”: “sight is predicated of bodily sight and of the intellect because understanding is in the mind as sight is in the eye” (ibid.).

22. “Sometimes the name implies something belonging to the thing primarily designated which cannot be common to God and creature even in the manner described above. This would be true, for example, of anything predicated of God metaphorically, as when God is called lion, sun, and the like, because their definition includes matter which cannot be attributed to God” (*De ver.* q. 2, a. 11, co.). In *Cont. Gent.* I, 30, Thomas defines metaphor in a slightly different way. He says that “Whatever names unqualifiedly designate a perfection without defect are predicated of God and of other things: for example, goodness, wisdom, being, and the like. But when any name expresses such perfections along with a mode that is proper to a creature, it can be said of God only according to likeness and metaphor. . . .

There are other names, however, which do not refer, in their primary meaning, to something in respect of which no similarity between God and creatures can be found. These are names such as “good” or “being.” We predicate them of God knowing the “goodness” and “being” (existence) of creatures, suggesting that what the goodness of a human is relative to his or her essence, God’s goodness is relative to His essence, and what the being (*esse*) of a human (or other creature) is in relation to his or her essence (*essentia*), God’s being is in relation to His divine essence:

$$[4] \quad \frac{\text{human goodness}}{\text{human essence}} = \frac{\text{God's goodness}}{\text{God's essence}},$$

$$[5] \quad \frac{\text{human being (esse)}}{\text{human essence (essentia)}} = \frac{\text{God's being (esse)}}{\text{God's essence (essentia)}}.$$

With reference to Cajetan’s typology, we may call this kind of predication the analogy of proper proportionality. When applied to divine names, it does not require a precise specification of the exact relation between finite and infinite, which makes it acceptable and, in fact, very useful in theology.²³

It seems that following Aquinas, we have so far managed to define two types of analogy that can be applied in theology. These are: (a) analogy of improper proportionality (metaphor), and (b) analogy of proper proportionality. However, Thomas was not satisfied with this achievement. He tried to go deeper and specify more accurately the analogical language of theistic assertions. On various occasions in his works, he mentions another classification, according to which we may distinguish between analogies of (i) two to a third, (ii) many to one, and (iii) one to another. The first of these refers to the situation in which two analogates have a

But the names that express such perfections along with the mode of supereminence with which they belong to God are said of God alone. Such names are the highest good, the first being, and the like.” Note that this reflection might also be treated as a description of intrinsic attribution (see below), which shows the ambiguity of Aquinas’ view of analogy.

23. “At other times, however, a term predicated of God and creature implies nothing in its principal meaning which would prevent our finding between a creature and God an agreement of the type described above. To this kind belong all attributes which include no defect nor depend on matter for their act of existence, for example, being, the good, and similar things” (*De ver.* q. 2, a. 11, co.).

common *tertium quid* that is predicated of them according to priority and posteriority. Aquinas defines this kind of analogy in *In Sententiarum* I, d. 35, q. 1, a. 4, and mentions it again in *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11, ad 6 and in *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* (hereinafter abbreviated as *In Meta.*) V, lect. 8 (§ 879), where he compares it with proportionality. In *De veritate* he gives an example of substance and two substantial categories: quality and quantity. We perceive them as analogous (with respect to each other) because they both stay in relation to a third, which is substance (according to priority and posteriority, as substance is first). The third can thus be seen as grounding the analogical relation between the two terms in question.²⁴ This kind of analogy would be inappropriate if applied to divine names, as there is no “third thing” that is prior and could be predicated both of God and creatures.

Similar, in a way, to the analogy of two to a third is the analogy of many to one. Aquinas mentions it in *Summa contra gentiles* I, 34: “The names said of God and creatures are predicated . . . analogically . . . according as many things have reference to something one. Thus, with reference to one health we say that an animal is healthy as the subject of health, medicine is healthy as its cause, food as its preserver, urine as its sign.” An attempt to apply this type of analogy in theological language raises doubts and questions similar to those invoked by the analogy of two to a third, “since we should then have to posit something prior to God” (*ibid.*).

The third type of analogy—the analogy of one to another—can also be classified (in reference to Cajetan’s typology) as an example of the analogy of intrinsic attribution (in opposition to the analogy of extrinsic attribution). This is another of Aquinas’ distinctions that we should mention here. Thomas explains it in *De veritate*, q. 21, a. 4, ad 2 and *Summa contra gentiles* I, 31. Concerning extrinsic attribution, we can predicate, for instance, the “healthiness” of urine. This is not possible because “healthiness” is inherent in it. Rather, it is a quality of an animal that can be found in its urine only extrinsically.²⁵ Intrinsic attribution, on the other hand, names perfections that belong to things intrinsically, and Thomas thinks

24. “One thing is put into the definition of two other things because both are predicated with reference to it, as substance is put into the definition of quantity and quality” (*De ver.* q. 2, a. 11, ad 6).

25. “[Extrinsic attribution] occurs when the very reference itself is the meaning of the denomination. Thus urine is called healthy with respect to the health of an animal. For the meaning of healthy as predicated of urine is ‘serving as a sign of the health of an animal.’ In such cases what is thus relatively denominated does not get its name from a form inherent in it but from something extrinsic to which it is referred” (*De ver.* q. 21, a. 4, ad 2).

that only this mode of analogy of attribution is proper to theology. We predicate the same names of God and creatures when the same perfections that can be attributed to God are realized and expressed, to some degree, in creatures, and are intrinsic to their natures (e.g., goodness):

The perfections of all things, which belong to the rest of things through diverse forms, must be attributed to God through one and the same power in Him. This power is nothing other than His essence, since, as we have proved, there can be no accident in God. Thus, therefore, God is called wise not only in so far as He produces wisdom, but also because, in so far as we are wise, we imitate to some extent the power by which He makes us wise. On the other hand, God is not called a stone, even though He has made stones, because in the name stone there is understood a determinate mode of being according to which a stone is distinguished from God. But the stone imitates God as its cause in being and goodness, and other such characteristics, as do also the rest of creatures. (*Cont. Gent.* I, 31)

Speaking of the same type of analogy (intrinsic attribution) in *De veritate*, Aquinas emphasizes the aspect of causal dependency of creatures on God:

A thing is denominated by reference to something else when the reference is not the meaning of the denomination but its cause. For instance, air is said to be bright from the sun, not because the very fact that the air is referred to the sun is the brightness of the air, but because the placing of the air directly before the sun is the cause of its being bright. It is in this way that the creature is called good with reference to God.²⁶

Note the difference between intrinsic attribution and proportionality (proper or improper). The latter is based on a comparison of two proportions or relations, while the former refers to just one relation, based on different degrees of realization of the same perfection in both analogates. As we shall see, this fact carries a crucial significance for the understanding of the analogy of being. Intrinsic attribution differs from proportion as well, as the latter is based on a precise ratio of the intensity or degree of the realization of a given property or perfection in the two analogates. Because

26. *De ver.* q. 21, a. 4, ad 2. The analogy of attribution is sometimes described as a relation between the main analogate to which the property in question belongs properly and formally, and another analogate to which the same property belongs relatively and derivatively. See, e.g., E. L. Mascall, *Existence and Analogy: A Sequel to "He Who Is"* (London: Longmans, Green, 1949), chapter 5, section II.

intrinsic attribution does not require us to specify their relationship with the same (mathematical) precision, it seems to be more appropriate for theological reasoning and predication.

2.2. Analogy within Analogy

Summing up our analysis so far, we might say that Aquinas is willing to accept in theology both the analogy of improper proportionality (metaphor) and the analogy of proper proportionality, in combination with the analogy of the one to the other—i.e. of intrinsic attribution. The former (improper and proper proportionality) protect divine transcendence, and provide a necessary counterbalance to the latter (intrinsic attribution), which emphasizes divine immanence. In other words, analogy in theology seems to have two necessary poles or aspects, the relation of which constitutes its objective meaning. It is analogous itself, and only in this way does it enable us to develop meaningful concepts describing God in relation to his creatures, without falling into the extremes of radical apophasis or agnosticism on the one hand, or of pantheism or panentheism on the other.

If we take proper proportionality by itself, we must realize that the sign of equality “=” between the two relations it juxtaposes cannot be taken literally. In other words, the relation of a point to a line in our example [1] described above is not exactly the same as the relation of a spring from which water issues to a stream. Nevertheless, our predication in [1] is still meaningful. Because we do know what the relations within both analogates are about (they are available to our cognition and perception), we realize that the relation between them is neither univocal nor equivocal. Hence, we call it analogical, and find it appropriate to predicate a “principle” of both the point and the spring.

The case of theology is different. Even if it might be right to claim that we do know the relations in both analogates in cases of improper proportionality (examples [2] and [3] above), we must acknowledge that the relations on the right side of both examples of proper proportionality (examples [4] and [5] above) are not known to us. We do not know what God's goodness, essence, and existence really are. Consequently, because the sign of equality “=” between both sides of proper proportionality cannot be interpreted literally, this type of analogy does not allow for any positive predication of divine names. It only helps us understand what God is not. For this reason, while protecting and expressing God's transcendence—when used as the one and only type of analogy in theology—it breaks down and falls into radical apophasis and/or agnosticism.

Mascall notes that some scholastic philosophers claim that the analogue on the right side of [5] is not entirely unknown to us. Modifying [5] in the form

$$[6] \quad \frac{(1) \text{ creature}}{(2) \text{ its being}} = \frac{(3) \text{ first cause}}{(4) \text{ its being}}.$$

Garrigou-Lagrange states that (3) is given to us as that in which “essence = existence,” which gives us a limited and analogical, yet genuine, knowledge of (4), within the analogy of proper proportionality.²⁷ Maurílio Penido offers a different strategy. Modifying [5] in the form

$$[7] \quad \frac{(1') \text{ essence of creature}}{(2') \text{ existential act of creature}} = \frac{(3') \text{ essence of God}}{(4') \text{ existential act of God}}$$

he claims that (4') is not unknown to us but given, prior to the analogy, as self-existence—*ipsum esse subsistens*, existence not really distinct from essence—which gives us a limited and analogical, yet genuine, knowledge of (3').²⁸ However, one might still question whether we can truly know or have a grasp of what the first cause (in which essence = existence) or self-existence (*ipsum esse subsistens*) really is. It does not seem to us that we can escape radical apophasis when using proper proportionality in reference to God and creatures. Aquinas is aware of this when he says that:

The mode of supereminence in which the abovementioned perfections [goodness, wisdom, being, and the like] are found in God can be signified by names used by us only through negation, as when we say that God is eternal or infinite, or also through a relation of God to other things, as when He is called the first cause or the highest good. For we cannot grasp what God is, but only what He is not and how other things are related to Him, as is clear from what we said above.²⁹

27. See Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Dieu, son existence et sa nature: solution thomiste des antinomies agnostiques* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1914), 541–42.

28. See Maurílio Teixeira-Leite Penido, *Le rôle de l'analogie en théologie dogmatique* (Paris: Vrin, 1931), 138.

29. *Cont. Gent.* I, 30. In *De pot.* q. 7, a. 5, co., Thomas says, after Dionysius [*Div. nom.* 1]: “Since all things are comprised in the Godhead simply and without limit, it is fitting that he should be praised and named on account of them all. Simply because the perfections which are in creatures by reason of various forms are ascribed to God in reference to his

At the other end of the spectrum, we may classify the analogy of intrinsic attribution. Considered outside of any theological context, it enables us to properly express the degrees of perfection in the realization or expression of numerous dispositions and properties, both at different levels of complexity of inanimate and animate entities, as well as across the variety of their types. To give an example, we may predicate life of a human being at various levels of complexity and organization of his or her organism:

[8] cell's life in human stomach : human stomach's life : human life

as well as predicate life about different types of organisms:

[9] daffodil's life : tiger's life : human life.

All three analogates in [8] refer to one and the same property of a particular type of life, realized to various degrees of complexity pertaining to human beings—to whom they refer to. Hence, we can predicate life analogically of a cell in a human stomach, a human stomach itself, and a human being as such, whose integral part is his or her stomach. In the case of [9], all three analogates in question have the property of being alive. Although each one of them is characterized by a different type (or mode) of life, these types (or modes) belong to the broader category of life: i.e. they share some common properties (or attributes), such as the capacity for metabolism, growth and reproduction, functional (teleological) activity, persisting in a state of homeostasis (far from thermodynamic equilibrium), etc. Thus, we can analogically predicate life of each one of them, even if—depending on their particular essences—it differs and is realized or expressed in them in various ways.³⁰

The case of theology is, again, radically different. On the one hand, both the creatures (daffodil, tiger, human) and God are alive. Because God is the source of life, and all types (or modes) of life have their source and beginning in his divine life (through divine exemplary ideas),

simple essence: without limit, because no perfection found in creatures is equal to the divine essence, so as to enable the mind under the head of that perfection to define God as he is in himself.”

30. One might say that we can predicate life of these analogates both univocally—in terms of the shared qualities that define the status of being alive in general—and analogically—in reference to the various realizations and expressions of the property of being alive in each one of them. Analogy in this case would be used of accidents, i.e., modes of realization of the same property of being alive.

it seems right to put them together in an expression of an analogical nature similar to [8]:

[10] daffodil's life : tiger's life : human life : God's life.

However, used in this way and as the one and only type of analogy in theology, intrinsic attribution clearly falls into pantheism or panentheism—both of which are unacceptable in the context of the classical theism. Because the life of God is neither merely of a different degree, when compared with the life of animate creatures (as with [8]), nor merely of a different kind within the same general category of life (as with [9]), the analogy of intrinsic attribution breaks down. Although it is correct in emphasizing and expressing the immanence of God and His presence in Creation (see *ST I*, q. 8, a. 3), when taken to its logical conclusion in theology it risks blurring the distinction between God and His creation. While it does show the similarity between God and creatures, it fails to give a proper account of their dissimilarity.

Hence, while Aquinas does not offer any definite and final statement concerning his notion of analogy, our analysis would suggest that its most appropriate interpretation within his system of philosophical theology introduces a type of synergy between proportionality (both proper and improper) and intrinsic attribution. The former emphasizes divine otherness, but fails to express the intrinsicity of the divine presence in creatures. The latter highlights inherent closeness of God to His creatures, but fails to articulate His otherness. Together, they enable us to develop a reasonable and consistent theological epistemology that avoids the extremes of radical apophasis and kataphasis. This conclusion finds proper explication in the case of the analogy of being (*analogia entis*), which is central to our investigation and to which we shall now turn.

2.3. *Analogy of Being in Aquinas*

As we have already pointed out, Aquinas never himself used the term “analogy of being” (*analogia entis*). Nevertheless, based on our explorations in the preceding sections, we may propose a definition and interpretation of it that will adhere to the guiding principles of his thought. Our point of departure, naturally, will be the distinction between created and divine essence (*essentia*) and existence (*esse*), which Aquinas introduces in his metaphysics and theology. With reference to created entities, he defines it as an additional and crucial kind of ontological composition, related to that of essence at the level of primary matter and substantial

form. Although the latter serves as a principle of acts (actualizing primary matter), Aquinas suggests that essence as such is still in potency with respect to existence, which he perceives as the most perfect among all ontological principles:

Being properly signifies: something-existing-in-act. (*ST I*, q. 5, a. 1, ad 1)

[It] means that-which-has-existence-in-act. (*In Meta.* XII, lect. 1 [§ 2419])

[Hence,] being . . . is the actuality of all acts, and therefore the perfection of all perfections.³¹

[It is] innermost in each thing and most fundamentally inherent in all things since it is formal in respect of everything found in a thing. (*ST I*, q. 8, a. 1, co.)

[Taken simply,] as including all perfection of being, [*esse*] surpasses life and all that follows it. (*ST I-II*, q. 2, a. 5, ad 2)

Moreover, shifting his reflection toward a theological analysis of the perfection of *esse*, Aquinas attributes its primary source to the Creator, who is the only being in whom *esse* is identical with *essentia*. In other words, while in the case of creatures the speculative distinction between essence and existence is grounded in a real metaphysical difference between them, in the case of God, the same speculative distinction does not find such ground. God's essence is his existence and *vice versa*. This fact leads Aquinas to claim that all creatures have their own *esse* by participation in God's *esse*:

[B]eing itself belongs to the first agent according to His proper nature, for God's being is His substance. (*Cont. Gent.* II, 52, no. 8)

In Him essence does not differ from existence. (*ST I*, q. 3, a. 4, co.)

Since therefore God is subsisting being itself, nothing of the perfection of being can be wanting to Him. (*ST I*, q. 44, a. 1, co.)

[*Esse*] belongs to all other things from the first agent by a certain participation. (*ST I*, q. 4, a. 2, co.)

31. *De potentia* (hereinafter abbreviated as *De pot.*) q. 7, a. 2, ad 9.

God alone is actual being through His own essence, while other beings are actual beings through participation, since in God alone is actual being identical with His essence.³²

This assertion becomes the pivotal point of Aquinas' definition of creation. He defines *creatio ex nihilo* not as any kind of motion or change, but as bringing into existence (into being) something that has not existed before:

[W]hat is created, is not made by movement, or by change. (*ST I*, q. 45, 3, co.)

Creation is not change. (*ST I*, q. 45, a. 2, ad 2)

[B]eing is the most common first effect and more intimate than all other effects: wherefore it is an effect which it belongs to God alone to produce by his own power. (*De pot.* q. 3, a. 7, co.)

[I]t must be that all things which are diversified by the diverse participation of being, so as to be more or less perfect, are caused by one First Being, Who possesses being most perfectly. (*ST I*, q. 44, a. 1, co.)

[T]he proper effect of God creating is what is presupposed to all other effects, and that is absolute being. (*ST I*, q. 45, a. 5, co.)

Consequently, thinking of what more contemporary theologians now distinguish as *creatio continua*, we may relate this to Aquinas's emphasis on a continual dependency of creatures on God in respect of their being:³³

[C]reation in the creature is only a certain relation to the Creator as to the principle of its being. (*ST I*, q. 45, a. 3, co.)

32. *Cont. Gent.* III, 66, no. 7. See also *ST I*, q. 4, a. 3, ad 4; q. 104, a. 1, co.; *In Sent.* I, d. 37, q. 1, a. 1, co.; *De ver.* q. 5, a. 8, ad 9; *Cont. Gent.* III, 65, no. 3; *Commentary on the Book of Causes*, transl. Vincent A. Guagliardo, Charles R. Hess, and Richard C. Taylor, (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 24. On the meaning of *ipsum esse subsistens* see Rudi A. te Velde, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden; New York; Köln: Brill, 1995), 119–25. Concerning the way in which Aquinas introduces the concept of *esse* in his writings see John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 238–53.

33. It is important to remember that the act of the Creator sustaining the being of creatures in time can—and for Aquinas must—still be eternal (timeless). In other words, one need not reject Aquinas's concept of divine eternity as timeless to defend the idea of *creatio continua*.

[T]he being of every creature depends on God, so that not for a moment could it subsist, but would fall into nothingness were it not kept in being by the operation of the Divine power.³⁴

What becomes crucial in Aquinas' understanding of creation is the nature of the existence (*esse*) that God bestows on creatures when bringing them about *ex nihilo*.³⁵ If, prior to the creation of the world, there was really nothing but God (i.e. divine *esse* identical with divine *essentia*), the *esse* bestowed on created entities must have come from—i.e. must have (in some way) been identical (*sic!*) with—God's *esse*. It thus seems right to say that creatures participate in the divine *esse* of their Creator at every moment of their existence.³⁶ Obviously, when saying this we are aware of the fact that the *esse* of creatures is realized in them to a different degree than in the case of God Himself, who is a pure *esse*. (Creaturally *esse* is not pure: it only actualizes created essence.) At the same time, based on Aquinas' teaching about God's immanent presence in the universe "by his essence . . . [i.e.] as the cause of . . . being" (*ST I*, q. 8, a. 3, co.), we are inclined to say that, in a way, we can attribute the same *esse* to God and creatures, and express their relation in an analogical expression of the type that we know as intrinsic attribution:

[11] being (*esse*) of a daffodil : being (*esse*) of a tiger : being (*esse*)
of a human : being (*esse*) of God.³⁷

34. *ST I*, q. 104, a. 1, co. On the unity of *creatio ex nihilo* and *creatio continua*, see te Velde, *Aquinas on God*, 125.

35. Note that nothingness in this context is not an equivalent of potentiality. Aquinas believes that the principle of potentiality—defined in his system of thought as primary matter—is also created (see *ST I*, q. 44, a. 2, co.), and ever since the very beginning of the universe has been informed by the substantial forms of the most basic elements: i.e. earth, water, air, and fire (see *ST I*, q. 66, a. 1).

36. Notably, in *ST I* q. 4, a. 3, Thomas—discussing the question of whether creatures can be considered like God—acknowledges some sort of real ontological likeness between God and creatures, based on the scriptural (protological and eschatological) argument found in Genesis 1:26: "Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness," (NABRE) and in the verse from 1 John 3:2: "when it [he] is revealed we shall be like him" (NABRE).

37. In *In Librum Boethii de Trinitate* (hereinafter abbreviated as *In Boeth. De Trin.*), q. 5, a. 4, Thomas notes that all contingent entities, insofar as they share in being, possess some principles that are common to all creatures. He adds that these principles are common not only through predication (*per praedicationem*), but also through causality (*per causalitatem*). When related to God the Creator, this leads to the conclusion expressed in *In Sent. I*, prol., q. 1, a. 2, ad 2, where Thomas says that each creature possesses *esse* insofar as it descends from the first being, and it is only named a being insofar as it imitates the first

Having said this, we must immediately qualify our proposal, as it brings us dangerously close to pantheism or panentheism. This is because divine *esse* is not only realized to a different degree when compared with creaturely *esse* (as depicted in [10]),³⁸ or merely of a different type that nevertheless belongs to the same category of *esse* (see our comment on [9] above). It rather radically transcends the *esse* of creatures, as God is not confined to any genus. It is an uncreated and eternal divine *esse*, infinitely different from the created (*sic!*) *esse* of creatures. The disparity between divine and created *esse* is best expressed in the assertion that states that the former is identical with divine *essentia*, while the latter differs from the *essentia* of a given contingent entity to which it belongs. It is a created *esse*, appropriate for the particular created *essentia* and actualizing it in a given entity. Consequently,

[a]lthough it may be admitted that creatures are in some sort like God, it must nowise be admitted that God is like creatures; because, as Dionysius says [*Div. nom.* 9] “A mutual likeness may be found between things of the same order, but not between a cause and that which is caused.” For, we say that a statue is like a man, but not conversely; so also a creature can be spoken of as in some sort like God; but not that God is like a creature. (*ST* I, q. 4, a. 3, ad 4)

Once we understand this truth, we realize that the analogy of intrinsic attribution in this case does not stand by itself. Emphasizing divine immanence, it requires proper proportionality to express divine transcendence. For it is precisely proper proportionality (see [4], [5], [6], and [7]) that helps us to keep either a moderate (providing we do know something about (3) in [6] and/or (4′) in [7]) or more radical (if we agree that we do not really know the analogates on the right side of [4], [5], [6], and [7]) apophasis in our predication of God in respect of His relation to the created universe.

This all shows that the synergy between intrinsic attribution and proper

being (as with wisdom and all other perfections). In *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5, ad 1, relating the same rule to the principle of causation, he adds that just as all univocal predications may be reduced to the predicate *being*—i.e. the first non-univocal but analogical predicate—so all actions of created agents are ultimately reduced to God, who is the universal, non-univocal but analogical agent cause (see also Darley, “Predication or Participation?” 317).

38. If this were the case, *analogia entis* would somehow subordinate God and creatures to a *tertium quid*: namely, some sort of being (*esse*) in which God and creatures participated (in different ways). In other words, it would cease to be an analogy of intrinsic attribution and become an analogy of many to one.

proportionality that defines—in our opinion—the very understanding of analogy within Aquinas' system of philosophy and theology finds its primary explication in “his” notion of what has later been called *analogia entis*. However, our opinion is by no means predominant when considered within the context of the long debate on the meaning of analogy in Aquinas. Hence, we shall now briefly advert to some alternative views concerning this matter.

3. ANALOGIA ENTIS: A MISCELLANY OF VIEWS

We have already mentioned an important passage from Aquinas' *In Sententiarum*, I, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1, as well as Cajetan's interpretation of this text, in which he (a) calls analogy according to intention but not being (e.g., “healthy” predicated of urine and animal, with one intention referring analogously to both things but having being in only one of them, where in this case this latter would be the animal) “analogy of extrinsic attribution”; (b) calls analogy according to being but not intention (e.g., “body” predicated analogously of material things and celestial bodies, they being equal in intention of corporeity which they share in common, but this element not having a being of the same kind in all of them) “analogy of inequality”; and (c) calls analogy according to intention and being (e.g., “being” predicated both of substance and accident, it being neither equal in intention nor in being when predicated of them) “analogy of proper proportionality.”³⁹

39. “Ad primum igitur dicendum, quod aliquid dicitur secundum analogiam tripliciter: vel secundum intentionem tantum, et non secundum esse; et hoc est quando una intentio refertur ad plura per prius et posterius, quae tamen non habet esse nisi in uno; sicut intentio sanitatis refertur ad animal, urinam et dietam diversimode, secundum prius et posterius; non tamen secundum diversum esse, quia esse sanitatis non est nisi in animali. Vel secundum esse et non secundum intentionem; et hoc contingit quando plura parificantur in intentione alicujus communis, sed illud commune non habet esse unius rationis in omnibus, sicut omnia corpora parificantur in intentione corporeitatis. Unde logicus, qui considerat intentiones tantum, dicit, hoc nomen corpus de omnibus corporibus univoce praedicari: sed esse hujus naturae non est ejusdem rationis in corporibus corruptibilibus et incorruptibilibus. Unde quantum ad metaphysicum et naturalem, qui considerant res secundum suum esse, nec hoc nomen corpus, nec aliquid aliud dicitur univoce de corruptibilibus et incorruptibilibus, ut patet 10 *Metaphys.*, ex philosopho et Commentatore. Vel secundum intentionem et secundum esse; et hoc est quando neque parificatur in intentione communi, neque in esse; sicut ens dicitur de substantia et accidente; et de talibus oportet quod natura communis habeat aliquod esse in unoquoque eorum de quibus dicitur, sed differens secundum rationem majoris vel minoris perfectionis. Et similiter dico, quod veritas et bonitas et omnia hujusmodi dicuntur analogice de Deo et creaturis. Unde oportet quod secundum suum esse omnia haec in Deo sint, et in creaturis secundum ra-

Although Cajetan's interpretation helps when it comes to summarizing and simplifying Aquinas' understanding of analogy, it is problematic and debatable. First of all, Cajetan reduces all of Aquinas' classifications of analogy to the one presented in *In Sententiarum* I. Naturally, the question arises of whether it is justified. Moreover, as we have already mentioned in the first section, inequality is not really an analogy at all for Cajetan. Thus, he reduces his threefold classification to the twofold division of analogy into analogy of attribution and analogy of proper proportionality, of which only the latter is regarded by him as appropriate for theistic predication. This is just because attribution is always extrinsic for Cajetan, while analogical names of God must be intrinsic. The view is problematic, though, in the light of our assertion from section 2.1 above, which stated that Thomas does leave room for analogy of attribution (a relation based on participation) to be intrinsic, and accepts it when it comes to predicating with respect to God. This makes Cajetan's position even more questionable.⁴⁰

Despite these difficulties, however, Cajetan's opting for proportionality has found acceptance and support in the writings of Garrigou-Lagrange (1914), Penido (1931), Maritain (1932), and more recently in Long (2011).⁴¹ The latter argues that proportionality structured by diverse proportions of act to potency is the only analogy capable of preserving God's transcendence. He claims that Aquinas' view in *De veritate* is foundational and conclusive. He repeatedly stresses that had Thomas changed his mind on this issue, he would have noted it down, which he never did.⁴²

Nevertheless, disapproval of Cajetan's view emerged as the histori-

tionem majoris perfectionis et minoris; ex quo sequitur, cum non possint esse secundum unum esse utrobique, quod sint diversae veritates" (*In Sent.* I, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1).

40. On the presentation and criticism of Cajetan's position see Ralph McInerney, *Aquinas and Analogy* (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1996), 3–29; Bernard Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being According to Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Edward M. Macierowski and Pol Vandeveld, revised edition (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2004), 120–40; Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy*, 7–12; Lyttkens, *The Analogy between God and the World*, 205–25; Mondin, *The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology*, 35–51; Nielsen Jr., "Analogy and the Knowledge of God," 52–54. More recent studies of late-medieval theories of analogy are less critical of Cajetan, emphasizing that his theory is not so much a bad interpretation of Aquinas as his own original answer to the questions that emerged after Thomas had proposed his conception of the analogical predication of divine names.

41. See Garrigou-Lagrange, *Dieu, son existence et sa nature*; Penido, *Le rôle de l'analogie en théologie dogmatique*; Jacques Maritain, *Distinguer pour unir, ou Les degrés du savoir* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1932); Steven Long, *Analogia Entis: On the Analogy of Being, Metaphysics, and the Act of Faith* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).

42. See *ibid.*, 55–6.

cally predominant stance. He was criticized first by the Spanish Counter-Reformation Jesuit Suárez, who argued that Aquinas had not taught any analogy of proportionality between God and creatures at all. According to him, Thomas only had approved the idea of intrinsic attribution with reference to God and the world. The opinion of Francesco Silvestri, in his notable commentary on *Summa Contra Gentiles* (ca. 1516), was similar, and today this seems to be the predominant view among scholars. Klubertanz states that with the exception of a few months around the year 1256, Aquinas never “held or considered holding proper proportionality as the intrinsic analogy explaining the ontological similarity between God and creatures.” Indeed, he “had not previously held, and would not subsequently hold, proportionality as even a complementary description” of this similarity, which he thought was based on “analogies of causal participation.”⁴³

The opinion of Rocca, who claims (in reference to *Cont. Gent.* I, 32; *De pot.* q. 7, a. 7, ad 2; *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5) that Aquinas’ notion of analogy is based on the ontological structure of participation between creatures and God (“predication by participation”), moves along similar lines. He sees God as sharing his goodness and other perfections with lower beings through participation, which generates, in turn, a shared bond of intrinsic, though limited, similitude between all the effects and their cause (source).⁴⁴ Emphasizing the influence of Neoplatonic metaphysics on Aquinas, Montagnes defines the Thomistic doctrine of analogy as “the semantics of participation”: i.e. “a metaphysics of the degrees of being” and not “a metaphysics of the idea of being.” He finds Thomas moving away from the language of imitation, formal causality and exemplarity, and towards describing analogy in terms of efficient (productive) causality and participation (“reference to one”).⁴⁵

43. Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy*, 94.

44. See Rocca, *Speaking the Incomprehensible God*, 282–86.

45. See Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being According to Thomas Aquinas* 157–62. Montagnes sees in Aquinas a development from an emphasis on likeness to an emphasis on causal dependence. He thinks Thomas realized that a “likeness-centered” account would be inadequate, as it could imply the sharing of a common form, and thus reduce to univocity. He found causal reference preferable, since it preserves difference while allowing a kind of unity thanks to the metaphysics of participation. Hence, on Aquinas’ mature account, the relationship between God and creatures is best understood logically as a case of analogy of attribution, with an intrinsic relationship (guaranteed metaphysically by participation). Montagnes adds that Aquinas’ experiment with proportionality in *De pot.* was merely a brief interruption in his shift away from the more naive “likeness-centered” account. He might have seen it as safeguarding divine transcendence better than

As the reader might well have guessed, the third position in this debate strives to bring proper proportionality and intrinsic attribution together, arguing in favor of what we have called “analogy within analogy.” On the one hand, it seems less popular than the other options. On the other, though, it has found some enthusiastic supporters within scholarly circles. It is certainly preferred by Mascall, who says that:

In order to make the doctrine of analogy really satisfactory, we must see the analogical relation between God and the world as combining in a tightly interlocked union both analogy of attribution and analogy of proportionality. Without analogy of proportionality it is very doubtful whether the attributes we predicate of God can be ascribed to him in more than a merely virtual sense; without analogy of attribution it hardly seems possible to avoid agnosticism.⁴⁶

Mascall adds that, despite being supportive of Cajetan’s view, Garrigou-Lagrange says at one point that “if the analogy of being is formally an analogy of proportionality, it is virtually an analogy of attribution, in the sense that if, *per impossible*, being did not belong intrinsically to the creature it could still be extrinsically attributed to it, in so far as the creature is an effect of the prime Being.”⁴⁷ Similarly, Wippel and Rocca, while agreeing with Montagnes, find some consistency between Aquinas’ earlier emphasis on imitation (proportionality) and his later shift toward causal dependence (attribution).

Hence, even if the conciliatory opinion does not seem to be predominant in Thomistic circles, it still remains one of the options, which we find viable, consistent, and fitting within Aquinas’ system of philosophical and theological predication with respect to God. Most importantly, it gained the support of Przywara, who defined his notion of *analogia entis* with reference to its main objectives. So it is now time for us to analyze the latter’s position.

the relationship of likeness. Nevertheless, once he realized that it implies no causal connection or intrinsic relationship, Aquinas quickly abandoned it in favor of participation (intrinsic attribution).

46. Mascall, *Existence and Analogy*, 113.

47. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Dieu, son existence et sa nature*, 541, notes, after Mascall, *Existence and Analogy*, 112, note 2.

4. PRZYWARA'S UNDERSTANDING OF *ANALOGIA ENTIS*

Erich Przywara (1889–1972) was certainly one of the most prominent Catholic theologians of the first half of the twentieth century, known for his erudition and acute intellect. He reintroduced the term *analogia entis*, giving it a more comprehensive meaning within the context of his time: i.e. treating it as a “fundamental form” of Catholic theology. The development of Przywara's understanding of *analogia entis* passed through at least three stages: (a) his early work and lectures (1922–25); (b) his *Religionsphilosophie katholischer Theologie* (1926); and (c) his most mature work on this topic entitled *Analogia Entis* (1932).⁴⁸

4.1. *The Main Objectives of Przywara's Notion of Analogy*

The point of departure for Przywara's notion of analogy is his metaphysical insight that everything mutable (*in fieri*) and finite can exist and act only by virtue of the ultimate ground: i.e. a being that exists absolutely and is infinite. With regard to this fact there are but two possible options: either one identifies the mutable, contingent, and finite with what is immutable, necessary, and infinite—as in the case of pantheism, panentheism (at least to some extent) and “theopanism”⁴⁹—or one applies the

48. See Erich Przywara, *Religionsphilosophie Katholischer Theologie* (München-Berlin: R. Oldenbourg, 1926); and Przywara, *Analogia Entis*. On the historical development and objectives of Przywara's notion of analogy, see John Betz, “After Barth: A New Introduction to Erich Przywara's *Analogia Entis*,” in *The Analogy of Being: Invention of the Antichrist or Wisdom of God?*, ed. Thomas Joseph White (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010), 35–87; and John Betz, “Translator's Introduction,” in Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics—Original Structure and Universal Rhythm*, trans. John R. Betz and David Bentley Hart (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014), 1–115. Apart from direct references to Przywara's *Analogia Entis*, our presentation of his thought is based on these two excellent essays. In what follows we shall present (a) the main objectives of Przywara's view of *analogia entis*, (b) his grounding of it in the terminology taken from the typology offered by Cajetan, and juxtaposing of *analogia proportionalitatis* with *analogia attributionis*, and (c) his introduction of the concept of “a new ‘attributive analogy;’” proceeding from above to below and sustaining the tension within *analogia entis*. While carrying out our analysis we shall also try to answer the question of whether Przywara's notion of analogy remains faithful to the teachings of Aquinas.

49. Przywara coins this term in his polemic with Barth. He defines it as a peculiar type of Gnosticism which does not assert that the world is independent from God (leading to modern secularism), but deprives creatures of their status of secondary causes, absorbing them into the divine life. In other words, while traditional Gnosticism—when applied to human beings—sees them as independent of God (thus themselves Gods), “theopanism” sees them as a pure emanation of divine transcendence. See Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 165–7, 228–31, 372–4. It is notable that Przywara never retracted his rejection of Barth's “theopanism,” just as Barth, never seems to have retracted his rejection of the *analogia entis*.

principle of analogy which allows us to perceive the former (mutable, contingent, finite) as grounded in the latter (immutable, necessary, infinite), which is nevertheless essentially different from it. By choosing the second option we can treat all perfections of creatures as an image (analogy) of the infinite perfection of the Creator. In other words, for Przywara, the basic structure of *analogia entis* (the *Ur-Struktur*) is that of an “in-and-beyond” (*in-über*, “in-over,” “in-above”). It helps us understand and express the truth that God is both in and above the creatures.

Understood this way, *analogia entis* has its own rhythm—one which does not resolve into an ultimate equilibrium between the two poles of divine immanence and divine transcendence. On the contrary, this rhythm is explicitly dynamic, and even the greatest finding concerning God is but the beginning of a new searching, as expressed in Augustine’s *invenitur quaerendus* (“that which is found is yet to be sought”⁵⁰). This turns our attention to Przywara’s careful emphasis on divine transcendence. He is convinced that *analogia entis* does not establish any immediate ontological or epistemological connection between God and creatures. On the contrary, it prohibits any such immediacy, whether ontological or noetic, precisely by virtue of the fundamental rhythm of the “in-and-beyond,” which protects us from every form of pantheism or secular doctrine of pure immanence.

Przywara, quoting Augustine’s “Si comprehendis, non est Deus” (*Sermo 117*, PL 38, 3.5, 663), reminds that the final word of *analogia entis* is God’s incomprehensible transcendence, his being *semper maior*. While this enables us to predicate matters of God, analogy will always be *reductio in mysterium*.⁵¹ It is essentially a form of apophatic theology in the tradition of Pseudo-Dionysius.⁵² Hence, *analogia entis* cannot be reduced to natural theology—something which justifies Przywara’s claim that his notion of *analogia entis* is simply an explication of the Fourth Lateran Council’s edict to the effect that “Inter creatorem et creaturam non potest tanta similitudo notari, quin inter eos non maior sit dissimilitudo notanda.”⁵³

50. See Erich Przywara *Religionsphilosophische Schriften* (Einsiedeln: Johannes-Verlag, 1962), 231.

51. See Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 88–9.

52. Betz elaborates on the Augustinian pulse of Przywara’s notion of *analogia entis*: “God of the *analogia entis* is none other than the God of Augustine—a God who is *interior intimo meo* but at the same time *superior summo meo* . . . *Deus interior* and *Deus exterior* . . . God more inward than we are to ourselves, and yet surmounting and transcending [all things] as infinite and incomprehensible” (Betz “After Barth,” 54–5 with references).

53. Heinrich Denzinger and Peter Hünermann, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, 43rd ed., transl. and ed. by Robert Fastiggi and Anne Englund Nash, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 806.

4.2. *Juxtaposing Attribution and Proportionality*

One of the important questions in the Przywara-Barth controversy is the question concerning the faithfulness of Przywara's notion of analogy to the teaching of Aquinas. While he does provide some elements of exegesis of the passages from Thomas's works that refer to his notion of analogy, Przywara decides, in his definition of *analogia entis*, to use the categories (i.e. the typology) introduced by Cajetan. On the one hand—taking into account the reservations mentioned in the third section here—this might be regarded as controversial. On the other, it seems to us that Przywara did understand the original position of Aquinas, and his use of Cajetan's terminology does not hinder his grasp of its main objectives.

Trying to specify the pivotal tension within *analogia entis*, Przywara refers to the two types of analogy: analogy of attribution and analogy of proportionality. Concerning the former, he does not distinguish between extrinsic and intrinsic attribution, but simply speaks of *analogia attributionis*. As regards the latter, he most often does not distinguish improper and proper proportionality, but simply uses the term *analogia proportionis*.⁵⁴ However, in the context of his works it becomes clear that what he understands by *analogia attributionis* and *analogia proportionis* are, respectively, intrinsic attribution and proper proportionality. The first "stands at the beginning . . . as the creaturely 'is (valid)' points to the divine Is (Truth, etc.) as its determinative original ground (*primo cognoscitur eius productio et efficacia*)."⁵⁵ The latter, understood not *secundum convenientiam proportionis* (i.e. via a mutual relation to the third), but rather *secundum convenientiam proportionalitatis* (and observing the absolute dividing line of difference),⁵⁶ is a suspended analogy between two radically different proportions, in the sense of ways of being: a relation of essence and existence in the creature ("unity in tension"—*Spannungseinheit*), and an essential unity of essence and *esse* in God ("single self"—*Wesenseinheit*).⁵⁷

Most importantly, Przywara thinks that for Aquinas the decisive analogy is essentially that of proportionality, which helps him to express his

54. See Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 231. On several occasions in *Analogia Entis*, e.g., on page 362, with reference to Aquinas' division in *De ver.* q. 23, a. 7, Przywara speaks about *proportio proportionalitatis*. On another occasion he uses the name *analogia proportionalitatis proportionis* (*ibid.*, 484).

55. *Ibid.*, 233.

56. *Ibid.*, 232.

57. See Przywara, *Religionsphilosophische Schriften*, 403.

deepest and ultimate apophatic conviction that in our theological predication “everything reduces to the ultimate irreducible *prius* of God”:⁵⁸

Every last “attributive” analogy (*analogia attributionis*) reduces to an incomprehensible “suspended” analogy (*analogia proportionis*). To be sure, there is such a thing as a positive statement concerning God, but it is merely the basis of a negative statement concerning his absolute otherness: *intellectus negationis semper fundatur in aliqua affirmatione: . . . unde nisi intellectus humanus aliquid de Deo affirmative cognosceret, nihil de Deo posset negare* [*De pot.* q. 7, a. 5, co.].⁵⁹ The positive commonality of the *ad aliquid unum* is led beyond itself into the genuinely Areopagitic “dazzling darkness” of the *diversas proportiones*—into an “ever greater dissimilarity”: *creaturae . . . quamvis aliquam Dei similitudinem gerant in seipsis, tamen maxima dissimilitudo subset* [*De ver.* q. 1, a. 10, ad 1]. An “attributive” analogy (*analogia attributionis*) . . . itself is already an incomprehensible “suspended” analogy (*analogia proportionis*) . . . Thus, the “summit of our knowledge” (*in fine nostrae cognitionis*) [*In Boeth. De Trin.* q. 1, a. 2, ad 1] is reached when this all-determining “analogy as relation of alterity” comes to full expression: in the “ever greater dissimilarity” within every “similarity, however great,” and therefore in the manifestation of the divine Is (Truth, etc.) as the unknown God, *Deus tamquam ignotus*.⁶⁰

In light of our analysis so far, we would wish to claim that Przywara did indeed correctly understand Aquinas, both in respect of his discovery of the tension between the analogies of intrinsic attribution and of proper proportionality, and in regard to his ultimately apophatic conclusion concerning our predications pertaining to God. Even so, in his most mature account of *analogia entis*, Przywara introduces a novel and distinct category, and this is one that may put his view into question.

4.3. A New “Attributive” Analogy

Most interestingly, when speaking of *analogia entis* Przywara does not conclude his explication with the analysis of the tension between attribution and proportion: i.e. with his assertion that

58. Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 233.

59. *Ibid.*, 231.

60. *Ibid.*, 232–33.

[t]he “attributive” analogy (*analogia attributionis*) is thus intrinsically overcome—by virtue of the ever new above-and-beyond of God, beyond even the greatest possible proximity to him—in an illimitable “suspended” analogy (*analogia proportionis secundum convenientiam proportionalitatis*).⁶¹

Toward the end of Chapter 6 of *Analogia Entis* (entitled: “The Grounding of Analogy as *Analogia Entis* in the Principle of Non-Contradiction”), he adds:

[t]hirdly—what is peculiar to the creaturely hereby stands out positively, against the background of the *Deus semper maior*, in its relatively distinct autonomy or proper causal agency (*causae secundae*). The illimitable “suspended” analogy (*analogia proportionis secundum convenientiam proportionalitatis*) establishes a new “attributive” analogy (*analogia attributionis*), but one that proceeds not, as in the first moment, from below to above, but rather from above to below: from the *Deus semper maior*, the creature’s “realm of service” is “attributed” to it. The “ever greater dissimilarity” (*maior dissimilitudo*) here has a positive sense: that of the delimitation of a positive realm into which the creature is “sent forth” for the “performing of a service.”⁶²

He then goes to explain that

“[s]ent forth” is to say that the creature receives its essential groundedness from the supereminent divine Is (Truth, etc.). To say “performing” is to underscore the active autonomy of the creature thus sent forth (*causae secundae*). To say “service” is to make clear how this active positivity is simply another and more acute form of the above-and-beyond of God (in the *maior dissimilitudo*): the mysticism of rapture is humbled by the distance between Lord and servant.⁶³

Finally, Przywara concludes by stating his ultimate definition of *analogia entis*, in which

“[l]onging” (in the ascending *analogia attributionis*) becomes a “blinding rapture” (in the *analogia proportionis*), in order to become “service” (in the descending *analogia attributionis*).⁶⁴

61. Ibid., 235.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

This is probably the most original aspect of Przywara's notion of *analogia entis*, which oftentimes goes unnoticed in studies of his thought and of his disagreement with Barth. It seems rather peculiar, once we realize that the concept of a new "attributive" analogy is potentially controversial for both classical Thomists and Barthians. The former may be willing to accuse Przywara of violating or alleviating the tension between attribution and proportionality, and of compromising the ultimate apophasis of human predication of God in a Hegelian-type of dialectic in which thesis (*analogia attributionis*) and its negation (*analogia proportionalitatis*) are balanced out in a synthesis (new *analogia attributionis*). The latter (Barthians) may certainly find in Przywara's concept of new "attributive" analogy a confirmation of their suspicion that his *analogia entis* presents a misleading picture of the human relationship to God as "open upwards," where this fails to give a proper account of our sin and the need for redemption.

Answering the first (Thomistic) objection, we need to realize that Przywara's new descending *analogia attributionis* is not a higher synthesis (of a Hegelian type) of the ascending *analogia attributionis* and *analogia proportionis*. It neither violates nor alleviates the tension between them, but merely expresses it in a way that registers, and points toward, its complementary, synergistic aspect. Przywara realizes, more than earlier thinkers deliberating on the meaning of *analogia entis*, that ascending attribution breaks into proportionality, which, in turn, breaks into the ultimate apophasis of *Deus semper maior*. The new *analogia attributionis* sustains the tension by only capturing the similarity between God and creatures from the starting point and basis of God's prior act, thus delimiting the positive notion of the realm of creatures and pointing towards their autonomy, which nevertheless remains within the same, ultimate and prior act of God. This makes our predication of God in his relation to the universe meaningful and consistent.

The new type of *analogia attributionis* finds its ultimate expression in human beings. Johnson is right in his assertion that, for Przywara, it is precisely this new aspect of *analogia entis* that gives a positive meaning to the life of a human being who, remaining restless before an ever greater God, "becomes able to enter into 'active service' of the majesty of God."⁶⁵ The ultimate goal of this service is thus described by Przywara himself:

This is most clearly expressed in the way that revelation portrays the perfection of Eternal Life. It is called a *visio beatifica*, indicating from this standpoint

65. Keith L. Johnson, *Karl Barth and the Analogia Entis*, 140.

the summit of union between God and creature: "to be light in light," in the formula of the Greek Church fathers. But precisely for this reason it is called *laus Dei*, which reveals the summit of union to be an ineffable dawning of the surpassing greatness of God, to whom the profoundest adoration is owed.⁶⁶

That this immediately raises the eyebrows of Barthians should hardly be surprising. Their accusation of blurring the difference between God and his creation and ignoring the problem of sin becomes acute. And yet, even if, in his earlier works, Przywara did not emphasize the sinfulness of human beings, by the time of his reflections on the philosophy of religion from 1926 he is able to clearly state that "between supernatural elevation and supernatural redemption stands, according to Catholic teaching, the *mysterium iniquitatis* of original sin . . . which is wiped away only by the God-man as the Redeemer."⁶⁷ In other words, for Przywara, original sin is precisely what contradicts (yet does not destroy) the original analogy of the *imago Dei* in a human being, and is only overcome by accepting redemption in Christ. Hence, as Betz emphasizes,

[w]hen Przywara says that the creature is "in its essence" structurally "open upward" to God, this in no way means that the creature is necessarily open to God in an existential sense. Nor by any stretch of the imagination does the *analogia entis*, as a created structure, automatically entail salvation—no more than nature automatically entails grace.⁶⁸

4.4. Przywara as a Faithful Follower of Aquinas

Approaching once again the question of whether Przywara remained faithful to the classical view of analogy offered by Aquinas, our claim is that it should certainly be answered in the affirmative. His *Analogia Entis* is deeply grounded in the thought of Thomas. It grasps the tension between intrinsic attribution and proper proportionality, which we hold to be the core aspect of the Thomistic notion of analogy. What is more, Przywara seems even to exceed the precision of Aquinas in his delineation of the way in which ascending attribution breaks into proportionality, which, in turn, breaks into ultimate apophysis of *Deus semper maior*. He thus expresses and strengthens Aquinas' recognition that analogy is ultimately a case of *reductio in mysterium*.

66. Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 235.

67. Przywara, *Religionsphilosophische Schriften*, 506.

68. Betz, "Translator's Introduction," 108–9.

At the same time, Przywara strives to sustain and uphold the dynamic rhythm of *analogia entis*, so that our predications concerning God do not die out, impeded by the ultimate apophasis stemming from the breakdown of the analogy of proportionality. He does this by introducing the concept of a new *analogia attributionis* which proceeds from above to below and sustains the tension within *analogia entis*. Although this is certainly a new aspect of analogical predication as it relates to God, it nonetheless remains within the orthodoxy of the thought of Aquinas. This brings us to the conclusion of our investigation, in which we shall attempt to address once more the Przywara-Barth controversy.

CONCLUSION: READDRESSING THE PRZYWARA-BARTH CONTROVERSY

Revisiting the Przywara-Barth controversy in the light of our research, we should first acknowledge that in the arguments of his interlocutor and adversary, Barth is confronted by a longstanding tradition of understanding, together with the basic defining principle of Catholic theology, this being *analogia entis*. In other words, by remaining faithful to Aquinas Przywara is not merely presenting his own views on the role of analogy in theology, but also the enduring standpoint of the Catholic tradition itself.

Secondly, as is well known, Barth regards *analogia entis* as the invention of the anti-Christ, accusing it of placing God and creatures on a common plane of being.⁶⁹ He sees it as a systematic principle displacing the priority of revelation in determining theological concepts. In other words, he thinks that it gets things backwards methodologically, in that it begins with reason and philosophy, and not with revelation and faith. He also charges it with threatening the uniqueness of Christ as mediator, as it relates God and creatures on the grounds of philosophical metaphysics and not in the context of the relation to salvation brought on by Jesus.

Our analysis clearly shows that the first of these accusations does not stand. We saw Przywara vigorously defending divine transcendence and

69. "I can see no third alternative between that exploitation of the *analogia entis* which is legitimate only on the basis of Roman Catholicism, between the greatness and misery of a so-called natural knowledge of God in the sense of *Vaticanum*, and a Protestant theology which draws from its own source, which stands on its own feet, and which is finally liberated from this secular misery. Hence I have had no option but to say No at this point. I regard the *analogia entis* as the invention of Antichrist, and I believe that because of it it is impossible ever to become a Roman Catholic, all other reasons for not doing so being to my mind short-sighted and trivial." Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*. ed. by G. W. Bromiley and F. T. Torrance. Volume 1, Part 1, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, translated by G. W. Bromiley (London and New York: T. & T. Clark, 2004), xiii.

otherness, emphasizing that the Catholic notion of analogy of being is ultimately an instance of *reductio in mysterium*. Regarding the relation of philosophy and theology, Przywara certainly accepts some form of natural theology as immanent in the concept of metaphysics as such. Hence, he acknowledges, after the teaching of Vatican I, that God, at least as a "positive limit-concept," can be known by the natural light of reason. However, although to this extent theology is already embedded in philosophy, it is not reducible to it. For theology, which deals with the supernatural mystery of things divine in themselves, becomes a reduction to the *Deus tamquam ignotus* of Aquinas and the "superluminous darkness" of the Areopagite. Moreover, because philosophy, in a sense, aims at theology, the latter becomes its *entelecheia*. Consequently, at the end of the day, *analogia entis* is not a principle from which anything could be derived. As Betz notes, Przywara sees it as a way of articulating *a posteriori* factual knowledge expressed in Scripture (revelation) and confirmed in religious experience.⁷⁰ Finally, concerning the uniqueness of Christ as mediator, Przywara is certainly convinced that nature is at best merely an indirect revelation of God, as its testimony is corrupted and ambiguous, due to angelic and human sin. As he notes in his discussion of analogy in Aquinas, all forms of creaturely mediation

fall short of the *personal* revelation of God as middle in "the mediator." Christ appears as *the* reality of the way in which God-the-middle takes up the All: as the "infinity that assumes" (*infinita virtus assumentis*), he is the unifying head of everything from the invisible to the visible, not only of all persons of every age, but also of pure spirits.⁷¹

Naturally, the conversation regarding the Przywara-Barth controversy has many other aspects to it. It concentrates on the question of whether, and to what extent, Barth's *analogia fidei* and *analogia relationis* presuppose, or are otherwise related to, Przywara's *analogia entis*. It also asks whether Barth changed his opinion and withdrew his fierce accusation levelled against the notion of *analogia entis*. However, we cannot address such issues here. Our goal, instead, has been to clarify whether Przywara remained a faithful student and interpreter of Thomas, and adequately represented the Catholic notion of *analogia entis*, in his conversation with Barth. On both counts, we hope to have shown that he did.

70. See Betz, "After Barth," 64–5.

71. Przywara, *Analogia Entis*, 301.

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