Spring 1989

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Mark Johnson
Marquette University, mark.johnson@marquette.edu

The New Scholasticism, Vol. 63, No. 2 (Spring 1989): 129-155. DOI.

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All students of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas readily admit that the saint was greatly influenced by the thought of Aristotle. The question of the extent to which St. Thomas was influenced by Aristotle, however, has long been a subject of discussion, and understandably so, since the role Thomists assign to Aristotle in the thought of St. Thomas will define, in large part, what the nature of St. Thomas's thought is for them. If Pico della Mirandola was right when he claimed that "sine Thoma Aristoteles mutus esset", is the reverse true too? Or is it rather that St. Thomas is able to speak because he listened to the text of Exodus 3:14, "I am Who am"?

This article cannot, of course, provide a definitive answer to so important and complicated a question, but my hope is that it may prove helpful in providing such an answer. The question that it does aim to answer is a historical one, and, simply put, it is this: did St. Thomas attribute a doctrine of creation to Aristotle? The phrasing of the question is important here, for I am not concerned with whether Aristotle himself held a doctrine of creation. That can be left to Aristotelian scholars, who likely are as divided on it as Thomists are on the role of Aristotle in St. Thomas's thought. My concern here, rather, is whether St. Thomas *thought* Aristotle had a doctrine of creation, for if he did, then he would likely

allow Aristotle a large role to play in the construction of his own metaphysics of *esse*. Creation is, after all, total dependence in *esse*.[1] Finally, this question has some additional urgency because some Thomists who place great importance upon *esse*, such as Etienne Gilson and Anton Pegis, deny that St. Thomas attributed a doctrine of creation to Aristotle.[2] All the same, it seems to me that in many texts St. Thomas *does* attribute a doctrine of creation to Aristotle, and I want to examine these texts in a brief, chronological survey, in order to establish this historical fact.

There are twelve texts that will be considered here. They, and the approximate dates of their writing, are the following:[3]

1. *In II Sententiarum*, d. 1, *expositio textus* (c. 1253).
2. *In II Sententiarum*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, ad 1 *in contrarium* (c. 1253).
3. *De articulis fidei et ecclesiae sacramentis* (1261–1265).
4. *Expositio super primam decretalem* (1261–1269).
5. *Quaestio disputata de potentia dei*, q. 3, a. 5 (1265–1266).
6. *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 44, a. 2 (1266–1267).
7. *In II Metaphysicorum, lect*. 2 (1269–1272).
8. *In VI Metaphysicorum*, lect. 1 (1269–1272).
9. *In VIII Physicorum*, lect. 2 (1270–1271).
10. *In VIII Physicorum*, lect. 3 (1270–1271).
11. *De substantiis separatis*, cap. 9 (1271–1273).
12. *In I De coelo et mundo*, lect. 8 (1272–1273).

A standard reading of Aristotle in St. Thomas's time was that found in Peter Lombard's *Sententiae in iv libros distinctae*, more commonly known as the *Libri sententiarum*, and the success of this work guaranteed that all the masters who produced *scripta* on this textbook of medieval theology would have to takes sides on whether Aristotle had a doctrine of creation. The *locus* for discussions on this question, of course, is Book 2, distinction 1, and, as we will see shortly, St. Thomas shows no hesitation in taking a side.

In the first chapter of distinction 1, Lombard begins his discussion of creation by citing Genesis 1:1, "In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram".[4] As Lombard secs it, Moses is here reporting that the world was made by God the creator in one beginning (*in uno principio a Deo creatore mundum factum*), and he sees the text from Genesis as destroying the opinions of those who held that there were many principles without their own principles (*plura sine principio fuisse principia*). Citing from the *Glossa* of Strabo,[5] Lombard gives Plato and Aristotle as examples, both of whom he considers to be among those who did not teach that the world depended on God as its one principle. Lombard deals with Plato first:

> For Plato thought that there were three principles, namely God, the exemplar, and matter: the latter uncreated, without begining, and God as a craftsman, and not as a creator.[6]

Lombard next deals with Aristotle, and he too does not accord with the teaching of Moses.

> But Aristotle asserted two principles, namely matter and form (*speciem*), and a third, called "operatorium"; he also said that the world always is, and always was.[7]

No doubt Aristotle's well-known doctrine of the eternity of the world helped establish the view that he denied the creation of things that is professed by Christians, but when the youthful St. Thomas approached these texts of Lombard he came prepared to distinguish the fact of creation from question of the eternity of the world, a distinction he made for the entirety of his career.[8]

1. In II Sententiarum, d. 1, expositio textus (1253).

The first text of St. Thomas that we will examine, as it happens, is his *expositio textus* on this very passage of Lombard, and it is, in all likelihood, St. Thomas's first written judgement on whether, for him, Aristotle had a doctrine of creation.

St. Thomas begins the *expositio textus* by recalling Lombard's judgment on Plato:

> *For Plato thought that there were three principles*: Note that in this Plato erred, because he posited that there are exemplar forms subsisting per se outside of the divine intellect, and that neither these forms nor matter has being from God.[9]

St. Thomas has no disagreement here with Lombard's claims about Plato, but it seems that Lombard's rendering of the position of Aristotle is incomplete, and this provides St. Thomas with an opportunity for an impromptu disputation as to the real thought of Aristotle. Once again he begins his discussion with a *lemma* from Lombard's text, following it with difficulties regarding the exact number of principles posited by Aristotle.

> *But Aristotle asserted two principles*: (1) [Lombard] seems to touch upon Aristotle's position incompletely, because Aristotle posits three principles in Book 1 of the *Physics*: matter, form and privation. (2) Furthermore, Aristotle posits not only an active exemplar cause, which is understood by the principle "operatorium", but also a final cause. (3) Furthermore, according to [Aristotle], the form and the agent and the end all coincide in the same thing, as he says in Book 2 of the *Physics*, and so he seems to have posited only two principles.[10]

This variety of possible interpretations of Aristotle requires St. Thomas to answer each in turn, but before he does so, he gives his general *determinatio* to this question.

> To this it should be said that Aristotle did not err in positing many principles, because he posited that the being of all things depends upon a first principle alone, and thus it remains that there is one first principle. He did, however, err on the eternity of the world.[11]

As St. Thomas sees it, the fact that Aristotle taught the eternity of the world did not commit him to the view that the being of things (*esse omnium*) did not depend upon a single principle.

St. Thomas next turns his attention to the difficulties, and responds to the first by pointing out that the privation posited by Aristotle in Book 1 of the *Physics* is only a principle *per accidens*, and is concerned with the *fieri* of a thing, and not its *esse*.[12] And where the second difficulty suggests a proliferation of first principles because Aristotle makes a distinction between the agent and the end, St. Thomas replies that Aristotle reduces the two to the same thing in number in Book 12 of the *Metaphysics*, where he says that the first acting principle moves as being desired by all things.[13]

The third difficulty had taken a different tack, and suggested that for Aristotle there are really two first principles, form and matter, since the many principles suggested by the first two difficulties are reduced by Aristotle into one thing: "the form and the agent and the end all coincide in the same thing, as he says in Book 2 of the *Physics*." St. Thomas begins his response to this argument by pointing out that the form that is a part of a thing, is not understood by Aristotle to be one in number with the agent, but one in species or likeness: "form autem quae est pars rei non ponitur ab eo (Aristotele) in idem numero incidere cum agente, sed in idem specie vel similitudine." St. Thomas continues:

> From this it follows that there is one first principle outside of a thing, which is the agent and the exemplar and the end, and two [principles] that are parts of a thing, namely form and matter, which are produced by that first principle.[14]

As St. Thomas sees it, Aristotle's first principle produces the matter and the form of things, and it is the one upon which the being of all things depend: "Aristoteles non erravit in ponendo plura principia, quia posuit esse omnium tantum a primo principio dependere." St. Thomas reiterates this claim in our next text, which is an article found in this same distinction of Book 2 of the *Sentences*.

2. *In II Sententiarum*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, ad 1 *in contrarium* (1253).

Lombard's brief analysis of creation, and of things pertaining to creation, provided the occasion for much discussion on these matters, and our next text is found in a question devoted to what surely was one of the hottest topics in St. Thomas's day: the eternity of the world. This fact is attested to by the sheer number of preliminary difficulties (i.e. fourteen), and by the number of arguments *sed contra* (i.e. nine). The topic and its many difficulties were taken very seriously by St. Thomas, for we find him responding to all twenty-three arguments made in the course of this article. The first set of arguments argue for the eternity of the world, and after they have had their say, they are confronted by the first argument *sed contra*.

> On the contrary, God is either the cause of the substance of the world, or not, but of its motion alone. If of its motion only, then its substance is uncreated; therefore it is a first principle, and thus there will be many first principles and many things uncreated, which was disproved above. But if [God] is the cause of the substance of the heavens, giving being to the heavens, since everything that receives being from something else follows it in duration, it seems that the world did not always exist.[15]

This *sed contra* operates under a disjunction between God as cause of being (*esse*) and God solely as cause of motion. Since the latter suggestion yields impossibilities as far as the argument is concerned, we are left only with the former, and the result of that, since dependence in being means posteriority in duration, is the *novitas mundi*: the world had a beginning in time.

Even though the conclusion of this argument accords with the position that he himself takes, St. Thomas decides to respond to this argument and all other arguments *sed contra* because he thinks that none of them is a strict demonstration. Furthermore, philosophers have answers for such arguments, and St. Thomas does not want those who hold the *novitas mundi* to be caught flat-footed![16]

In his response to the argument St. Thomas has no qualms about joining the two possibilities not joined in the argument. In other words, he does not see any difficulty in maintaining that God is both the cause of being and of motion.

> …it should be said that, as the Commentator says in the book *De substantia orbis*, Aristotle never intended that God should be the cause of the motion of the heavens alone, but that he should also be the cause of its substance, giving it being (*esse*). For, since [the heavens] are of finite power, because they are a body, they require some agent of infinite power, from which they have both perpetuity of motion and perpetuity of being, just as they have motion and being [from it]. It does not, however, follow from this that God should precede the heavens in duration, because he is not giving being through motion, but through eternal influence, insofar as his knowledge is the cause of things. And from the fact that he knows from all eternity and wills, it follows that things are from all eternity, just as from the fact that the sun is from all eternity it follows that its ray is from all eternity.[17]

While this text occurs in the context of a discussion of the duration of the world, our concern is St. Thomas's attribution to Aristotle of a God who gives *esse* to the heavens, and not just motion. It is true, of course, that St. Thomas cites Averroes, and the possibility must be entertained that St. Thomas is giving, not his own opinion, but that of Averroes. Then again, other considerations suggest that St. Thomas is not using this citation in order to hide behind Averroes. First of all, there is our first text, the *expositio textus*, where St. Thomas is speaking on his own, and there he says much the same thing that is said here: Aristotle teaches that the being (*esse*) of things depends upon a single first principle.

Second, there is no authoritative text cited in the argument *sed contra* to which St. Thomas is replying. Aristotle is not mentioned in the *sed contra*, and yet he appears as the subject of St. Thomas's response. Now, unless we want to say that St. Thomas introduces Aristotle *ex abrupto* into the response, the only option we would seem to have left is that St. Thomas wrote the *sed contra* argument based on a common view that Aristotle's doctrine of the eternity of the world precluded a doctrine of the total dependence in being of things upon a single principle. In his reply, then, St. Thomas was out to make the point that such a common view was wrong: "Aristoteles numquam intendit quod Deus esset causa motus caeli tantum, sed etiam quod esset causa substantiae ejus dans sibi esse."

3. De articulis fidei et ecclesiae sacramentis (1261–1265).

This text presents a difficulty because the textual tradition that is preserved in most editions is ruled out by H. F. Dondaine, O.P., the editor of the text of *De articulis fidei* found in the Leonine edition.[18] I shall deal first with the textual difficulty.

In his 1939 Aquinas Lecture, *Saint Thomas and the Greeks*, Anton C. Pegis claimed that is not easy to determine how St. Thomas interpreted Aristotle on the problem of creation. But in the middle of a long footnote. Pegis insisted:

> But there is one text, at least, in which St. Thomas has categorically denied that Aristotle had a doctrine of creation: "Tertius est error Aristotelis, qui posuit mundum a Deo factum non esse,

> sed ab aeterno fuisse…"…Whatever view on Aristotle we attribute to St. Thomas, we must recognize the historical decisiveness of this conclusion.[19]

Now Pegis was citing *De articulis fidei et ecclesiae sacramentis*, a text he took from Pierre Mandonnet's edition of the *Opuscula Omnia* that was published in 1927,[20] but the text found in the Mandonnet edition was taken from the Vives edition, published some fifty some-odd years beforehand, and it, too, contained the crucial *non* upon which Pegis made his claim.[21] Pegis cannot be faulted for the textual tradition of the edition he was using, of course. Indeed, how could he have known that the text found in every single printed edition save one was false? But the fact is that the Leonine edition does not even contain the *non* as a variant reading in *any* of the fifteen manuscripts upon which the critical edition was based.[22] Fr. Dondaine takes the *non* to be a "correction" that was introduced into the manuscript traditions upon which the earliest editions were based.[23] The manuscripts that commence these traditions, however, all date from the fifteenth century, while the edition that Dondaine provides has as its core, manuscripts that date from the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. I cannot think of any reason for not regarding the Leonine text as authoritative, and if we do take it as authoritative, then the text from the *De articulis fidei* will be of some importance.

This work contains a list of errors concerning the articles of faith and the sacraments, and is addressed to the Archbishop of Palermo. St. Thomas begins the treatise by telling the Archbishop that the first six articles of faith concern God, and deal with three aspects of divinity: the divine unity, the Trinity of Persons, and the effects of divine power. Our text is found among a list of errors concerning the latter.

St. Thomas lists six errors concerning the effects of divine power to the extent that they concern "the creation of things in the being of nature": *pertinet ad creationem rerum in esse naturae*. Now Democritus and Epicurus erred concerning this article, because they thought that neither the world's matter nor its composition came from God. Plato and Anaxagoras erred next, for they posited that the world was made by God (*factum a Deo*), but from a pre-existing matter.[24] St. Thomas next lists the error of Aristotle:

> The third error is that of Aristotle, who posited that the world was made by God, but from eternity. Against him it is said in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."[25]

St. Thomas does not say explicitly here that Aristotle held that the very being of everything, even matter, depends upon God, but the context seems to require that this is what he had in mind. If he did not think so, for instance, how would Aristotle's error differ from Plato's? Furthermore, the first error is of those who thought that God produced neither matter nor the composition of the world, and Aristotle is not mentioned there. I am suggesting here a movement of St. Thomas's thought, as it were. As St. Thomas sees it, the first error held that neither the matter of the world nor its composition came from God, while the second error held that the world's composition *did* come from God, but not its matter. The third error, it would seem, held that *both* the world's matter *and* its composition came from God, but that this was an eternal occurrence. Hence St. Thomas cites the text from Genesis, which proclaims a beginning (*principium*) of the world. The next text that we will deal with lends, I think, some credence to this reading.

4. Expositio super primam decretalem (1261–1269)

This text does not present us with textual difficulties, as the preceding text did, but there is a problem as to its date. This work is addressed to the Archdeacon of Todi, who was most likely Gifredus d'Anagni, who held that position during the 1260's. Our knowledge does not extend beyond this, and so Father Weisheipl and the Leonine editor, Father Dondaine, date the work during St. Thomas's Italian sojourn, which took place between 1261–1269.[26] I include this work here because of its affinity to the *De articulis fidei* just dealt with.

This work is an exposition of the Creed *Firmiter* issued by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, and it contains, as does the *De articulis fidei*, a list of errors concerning matters of faith. The creed's confession of belief in "a Creator of all things visible and invisible, spiritual and corporeal" allows St. Thomas the occasion to mention the heresy of the Manichees, who held that there were two creators. The Catholic faith, St. Thomas points out, holds that all things besides God, as much visible things as invisible things, were created by him, and St. Thomas makes no mention of Aristotle. But after listing other errors concerning creation, St. Thomas does mention an error that Aristotle made:

> Another error was that of Aristotle who posited indeed that all things were produced by God, but eternally, and that there was no beginning of time, whereas it is written in Genesis 1 "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"; and to exclude such an error the decretal adds "from the beginning of time."[27]

The meaning of this text seems clear to me: Aristotle's error, as St. Thomas sees it here, was not that he denied that the very being of things depended upon God, but was rather that he held that such a dependence was eternal.

5. Quaestio disputata de potentia dei, q. 3, a. 5 (1265–1266)

This article has particular importance because St. Thomas is here dealing with creation and the stand of philosophers with respect to creation. Here, for the first time, St. Thomas gives a brief history of philosophical reflection on whether there can be anything that is not created by God, a history that he would repeat twice more.[28]

The first philosophers, being prone to consider things under their sensible aspects alone, paid attention solely to accidental forms, which are attainable by sense, and ended with doctrines that held that matter was the cause of all, and that it itself was uncaused. The philosophers who followed these earlier philosophers came to obtain some understanding of substantial forms, but their concern centered upon special forms. They therefore posited certain efficient causes, not causes that universally conferred being to things, but causes that moved matter to this or that type of form. According to them, not all beings proceeded from an efficient cause, for matter was presupposed to the activity of the efficient cause. Following these philosophers, St. Thomas claims, were Aristotle and Plato:

> But later philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, and those that followed them, came to a consideration of universal being itself, and because of this they alone posited some universal cause of things, a cause from which all other things come forth into being.[29]

Worthy of note here is the historical movement that St. Thomas saw taking place. The first philosophers dealt with particular, sensible things, in a way that did not allow them to transcend the individuality of things; they could not transcend the accidental forms that made things sensible as individuals. The second group of philosophers transcended the consideration of accidental forms to a consideration of forms that are of broader extension than accidental forms, namely substantial forms, forms which they began to study to some extent (*aliquatenus*). But despite this they did not come to a consideration of universal things. Plato and Aristotle, however, did come to such a consideration, for they came to a consideration of universal being itself, and because of this (*et ideo*) they alone posited the dependence of all things upon a universal cause of being: "cui quidem sententiae etiam catholica fides consentit."

6. *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 44, a. 2 (1266–1267)

This text is usually listed in the editions among the *loca parallela* to the *De potentia* text just examined. Containing the second history of this question mentioned above, this text, too, occurs in a treatment of creation, although this article's particular aim is to establish that prime matter is created by God.[30]

St. Thomas begins the history of the question by pointing out that philosophers came step by step (*pedetentim*) to the truth on this matter. The first group of philosophers thought only in terms of sensible accidental changes, and as a result assigned causes of these accidental changes only, such as friendship and strifc. A second group distinguished between substantial form and matter, but posited that matter was uncreated. They perceived that transmutation occurred in bodies because of essential forms, and so they assigned more universal causes, such as Aristotle's elliptic circle, or Plato's ideas.

But St. Thomas introduces a cautionary note into the discussion. We should remember that matter is contracted by form to a determinate species, just as a substance of some species is contracted to a determinate mode of being by an accident that attaches to it (*accidens ei adveniens*), as when man is contracted (*contrahitur*) by being white. We are being told, then, that the considerations provided thus far deal with specific modes of being, and not with being as such. St. Thomas continues:

> Each therefore considered being under a certain particular consideration, either insofar as it is this being, or insofar as it is such and such a being. And so they assigned particular agent causes to things.[31]

To whom does "each" (*utrique*) refer here? If we ask E. Gilson this question, he responds that St. Thomas is referring to Plato and to Aristotle, and having done that, Gilson reads the entire article as a denial on St. Thomas's part that Aristotle had a doctrine of creation. Indeed, he uses his interpretation of this article to read the text from the *De potentia* just dealt with, and so, when St. Thomas says there that Aristotle and Plato came to consider *ipsum esse universale*, he didn't mean *ipsum esse universale* at all, he rather meant *ipsum esse substantiale*.[32] But this presents problems.

To begin with, Gilson seems guilty of an error in his translation of the Latin text. The Latin singular pronoun *uterque* is used to refer to two individuals separately, and employs a singular verb; *ambo* refers to two things collectively, and employs a plural verb. If St. Thomas had wanted to refer to Plato and Aristotle here, he would have had to write "uterque…consideravit…" What emerges is that the *utrique* refers not to two individuals taken separately, but to two groups taken separately,

and the shift from individuals to groups, from the singular *uterque* to the plural *utrique* explains why the verb here is in the plural: "utrique…consideraverunt…"[33] St. Thomas's meaning in this text, then, is that both groups of philosophers, those who spoke in terms of accidental changes (*tale ens*) and those who spoke in terms of essential changes (*hoc ens*), were still considering the existence of things from a particular, and not a universal, point of view. The stage is set, then, for the third part of St. Thomas's historical explanation of thought on being. Some philosophers went even further than the earlier philosophers, and came to consider being as being, *ens inquantum est ens*, and they considered the cause of things, not as they are this thing, or such and such a thing, but as beings.[34]

Could Aristotle be among these philosophers who arrived at a knowledge of being as being? Even if Gilson did incorrectly read the *utrique*, one cannot ignore the fact that St. Thomas uses Aristotle's elliptic circle as an example of a more universal cause of substantial being (*hoc ens*). Furthermore, he does not name Aristotle explicitly here as he did in the corresponding portion of the *De potentia*. All the same, I myself do not think that Aristotle is out of the running here. My reason for this is that Aristotle's elliptic circle is cited here by St. Thomas as an example of the kind of more universal cause assigned by those in the second group of philosophers, namely those who spoke of the essential transmutations of bodies brought about by substantial forms. But those who held these doctrines, St. Thomas maintains, also thought that matter was uncreated: "Ulterius vero procedentes distinxerunt per intellectum inter formam substantialem et materiam, *quam ponebant increatam*." As we have already seen, St. Thomas had many opportunities to claim that Aristotle held that matter was not created, but he never made such a claim. In fact, he consistently seems to claim the opposite.[35] It seems to me, therefore, that St. Thomas does not introduce Aristotle as a *member* of the second group, and all I am saying is that, while St. Thomas does not explicitly include Aristotle here in the third group, who attained *ens inquantum est ens*, he could have. I also have the suspicion that, for St. Thomas, Aristotle *is* a member of this third group, but this must await the completion of our textual survey.

7. *In II Metaphysicorum*, lect. 2 (1269–1272)

In the second book of the *Metaphysics* (2.1:993b20–30) Aristotle is investigating the intimate connection between truth and existence, an investigation that would eventually bear fruit in the axiom *propter quod unumquodque tale, et illud magis*, and concludes the first chapter by claiming that, as each thing is related to existence, so is it related to truth. Now the discussion that led to this claim concerned the principles of things that always are, and St. Thomas takes the latter to be the celestial bodies.[36] The principles of things that always are must be most true, Aristotle claims, for these principles cannot be sometimes true, and sometimes not true. The reason for this, St. Thomas thinks, is that the things that always are, transcend generable and corruptible things precisely in this, that the former always are, and the latter sometimes are and sometimes are not. Hence their principles must always be true. St. Thomas gives a second reason for this. The principles of things that always are, are causes of being for other things, while they have no cause of their own being, and in this, St. Thomas claims, these principles transcend the heavenly bodies in truth and in being: "Et per hoc transcendunt in veritate et entitate corpora caelestia." St. Thomas continues, drawing a further conclusion:

> …which heavenly bodies, even if they are incorruptible, nonetheless have a cause not only as to their being moved, as some have thought, but also as to their being, as the Philosopher says here explicitly.[37]

Worthy of note here, of course, is the fact that St. Thomas does not mention God as the principle that is most true, and that is the cause of being (*esse*) of the heavens. Indeed, the discussion here is carried on in terms of many principles, which would seem to preclude the possibility of the discussion's being here about creation. I cite the text because I think it important to note that St. Thomas sees Aristotle claiming that the heavens depend, not just for their motion, but for their being (*suum esse*), upon something beyond themselves, be that something one or many. In our next text, however, St. Thomas takes a more precise stand.

8. *In VI Metaphysicorum*, lect. 1 (1269–1272)

The sixth book of the *Metaphysics* begins with a treatment of how metaphysics differs from other sciences in its treatment of being, and here, of course, Aristotle deals with how the three speculative sciences can have considerations of things more or less removed from matter and motion. The conclusion of this discussion, as St. Thomas sees it, is that metaphysics deals with the separable and immobile beings, the *maxime entia*, beings which consequently are the causes of other things, as was pointed out in the second book of the *Metaphyscis*.[38] These causes, it turns out, are the common causes of all beings, and are the causes of beings insofar as they are beings, and are therefore studied in metaphysics.[39] Suddenly, and without any warning, St. Thomas makes the following claim:

> From this one sees clearly the falseness of the opinion of those who said that Aristotle thought that God is not the cause of the substance of the heavens, but of its motion alone.[40]

As St. Thomas sees it, Aristotle's view as to what metaphysics studies commits him to a view that the substance of the heavens depends upon something else, which St. Thomas identifies here with God. Again, for our present purposes it is important only to note *that* St. Thomas makes such a move. Why he makes the move is another, though not unrelated, matter.

9. *In VIII Physicorum*, lect. 2 (1270–1271)

St. Thomas provides here the third brief history of philosophy as regards the ability of philosophers to attain to a first cause of all being, a *prima causa totius esse*. The occasion for St. Thomas's account here is the criticism of creation Averroes makes in his commentary on the *Physics*, because the eternity of motion that Aristotle posits in Book 8 of the *Physics* seems to preclude, so Averroes thinks, the possibility of creation.[41] St. Thomas responds to this, dealing with the many arguments Averroes brings forth, and it is in response to Averroes's third argument that St. Thomas makes his remarks about philosophers and their knowledge of being. After having given some arguments that turn on the notion of change, and on the meaning of *ex* in the phrase *ex nihilo*, Averroes invokes the fact that the philosophers have all maintained that nothing can come from nothing, *ex nihilo nihil fit*. St. Thomas responds:

> What Averroes also introduces about the ancient opinions of philosophers does not have efficacy, because the ancient naturalists were not able to come to a first cause of all being, but they considered the causes of particular changes. Of these naturalists the first considered the

> causes of accidental changes only, claiming every coming-into-existence (*fieri*) to be an alteration. But the philosophers who followed them came to a knowledge of substantial changes. But later philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, came to know the source of all being.[42]

If one thinks in terms of particular changes, St. Thomas thinks, then one will never be able to arrive at a source of all being. Averroes himself is deceived in this way.[43] Those who posit a universal production of all being do so precisely because they do not consider only particular productions from particular causes, as the naturalists had done.[44]

Does St. Thomas mean here to include Aristotle, or Plato for that matter, among those who posit *aliquid fieri ex nihilo?* We should point out that neither in this text, nor in any other text, does St. Thomas claim that Aristotle taught creation in so many words. He does not say *Aristoteles docuit omnia praeter Deum creata esse*. Then again, St. Thomas himself does not use the verb *creare* or any of its forms in this *lectio*. All he speaks about is a *productio rerum* or *productio universalis totius esse*. But St. Thomas does say that Aristotle speaks of a production of things from God, but from eternity: "…si intelligamus rerum productionem esse a Deo ab aeterno, sicut Aristoteles posuit…"[45] Given that St. Thomas thinks that Aristotle came to know the source of all being (*principium totius esse*), it seems to me difficult to read this last passage in any other way than to read it as claiming that Aristotle has an eternal production of beings from God: a doctrine of eternal creation. At any rate, our next text is more positive in this respect.

10. *In VIII Physicorum*, lect. 3 (1270–1271)

Towards the end of the first chapter of the eighth book of the *Physics* Aristotle takes issue with Democritus for his having been satisfied with "because it was always this way" as an explanation in nature. Democritus does not think that one should seek a principle for that which always is or always occurs.[46] But Aristotle points out that there are things that always are, but which are nonetheless caused, and he gives the example of a triangle, which always has three angles equal to two right angles, but which has a cause of this eternal characteristic or passion.

At this point in his commentary, St. Thomas tells us that we should pay special attention: "Est autem valde notandum quod hic dicitur."[47] The reason for this is that, as was pointed out in the second book of the *Metaphysics*, the disposition of things in truth and in being is the same,[48] and St. Thomas draws the following conclusion:

> Therefore, just as there are some things that always are true, and that nonetheless have a cause of their truth, so also did Aristotle understand that there are some beings that always are, namely the celestial bodies and the separate substances, and that they nonetheless have a cause of their being.[49]

St. Thomas continues, being even more specific:

> From this it is clear that even though Aristotle posited an eternal world, he did not, however, believe that God was not the cause of being for the world (*causa essendi ipsi mundo*), but the cause of its motion alone, as some have said.[50]

Once again St. Thomas employs his teaching, a teaching he gets from Aristotle, that "being always" does not preclude "being caused", and this leads him to conclude that, for Aristotle, God is the cause of both the world's motion and its being. God is the *causa essendi ipsi mundo*.

11. *De substantiis separatis*, cap. 9 (1271–1273)

In a brief, but fascinating passage in the ninth chapter of *De substantiis separatis* St. Thomas again makes a claim about Aristotle and Plato, and, once again, it seems that he attributes a doctrine of creation to them both.[51] The general context here, of course, consists in a review and assessment or what philosophers had to say about separate substances. The more immediate context in the ninth chapter is the review of opinions of those who held that spiritual substances are not created, and here St. Thomas answers what could be a nagging doubt about the doctrine of Aristotle and Plato. Calling to mind once again the doctrine that some things that are necessary have a cause of their necessity, St. Thomas says:

> One should not think, therefore, that just because Plato and Aristotle said that immaterial substances or even the celestial bodies always were, that they denied them a cause of being. They deviate from the Catholic faith not for saying that beings of this kind were uncreated, but for saying that they always were; the opposite of this is held by the Catholic faith.[52]

Once again we do not see St. Thomas making the positive claim that Aristotle or Plato had a doctrine of creation, although that clearly seems a fair inference, given what he does say. Both Aristotle and Plato hold for the eternal existence of immaterial substances and of the celestial bodies, and yet, as St. Thomas sees it, both provide causes of being for these beings. Their only error, at least here, is that they posited the eternal existence of the beings to which they did not deny a cause of being: "non…eis subtraxerunt causam essendi."

12. *In I De coelo et mundo*, lect. 8 (1272–1273)

Our final text is from St. Thomas's commentary on the first book of the *De caelo*. In a passage that deals with contrary natural motions, Aristotle raises the possibility that such motions could totally cancel one another out, or, if one were stronger, it would cancel the other out, rendering it useless. But, Aristotle continues, God and nature make nothing that does not have its use: "Deus autem et natura nihil faciunt frustra."[53] St. Thomas comments:

> Now, it should be noticed that Aristotle here maintains that God is the maker of the heavenly bodies, and is not only a cause after the manner of an end, as some have said.[54]

Now, it must be admitted that St. Thomas does not say anything here about whether Aristotle's God is a cause of being; he speaks here only of God's being a maker (*factorem*). And yet, when this text is read in connection with what St. Thomas has said before, a more precise picture emerges. St. Thomas has maintained that Aristotle's God is both a giver of being and of motion, and he has never included Aristotle among those who posit the uncaused existence of matter. In short, as St. Thomas reads Aristotle, the God he presents cannot be just a demiurge, for he appears to be responsible for the matter of things as well. And while certainty cannot be had here about what *factor* means, it would seem to mean that God here is the one who makes the very substance of the heavenly bodies.

Conclusion

Does St. Thomas attribute a doctrine of creation to Aristotle? Honesty bids me admit that we do not have his *ipsissima verba*, if by that we mean that in no place does St. Thomas say "Aristotle taught creation." And yet, if we examine the content of the words that St. Thomas does provide, it seems undisputable that he did, in fact, attribute a doctrine of creation to Aristotle. Time and time again he had the opportunity to include Aristotle among those who posited the uncaused existence of matter, and not once did he do so. Rather, he would proceed to claim that, for Aristotle, the being of things depended upon God, but that they existed eternally. That is why he made constant reference to his preferred text from the *Metaphysics*, a text which taught that of some things that always are, or always are true, there is a cause of their being, or of their being true. This provides St. Thomas with the key to unlock the problem of the heavenly bodies; if Aristotle said that they were always, that meant that they were caused always.

St. Thomas was perfectly aware that his reading of Aristotle was new. Whereas *quidam* thought that Aristotle's God was a mover after the manner of an end only, for St. Thomas Aristotle's God is the maker of the heavenly bodies. Whereas *quidam* thought that Aristotle's God was a mover only, St. Thomas saw him as both the cause of motion and of *esse*, producing things in being. "Hoc autem creare dicimus, scilicet producere rem in esse secundum totam suam substantiam."[55] For the entirety of his career St. Thomas claimed that Aristotle's God was the one upon whom the *esse omnium* depended, and on this matter he never changed his mind.[56] Whether St. Thomas was right in attributing a doctrine of creation to Aristotle is a fair question, but *that* he did so seems to me beyond dispute.

Pontificial Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Notes

[*]This article is an outgrowth of many discussions that I have had in the past with my teachers, the late James A. Weisheipl, O.P., and Lawrence Dewan, O.P., both of the Pontificial Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, Canada. Neither man is to be held responsible, of course, for what I say.

[1]"Hoc actem creare dicimus, scilicet producere rem in esse secundum totam suam substantiam." St. Thomas, *In II Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, a. 2, *in corp*., (Stuttgart; Frommann-Holzboog, 1980), vol. 1, p. 123, col. 3. The text used in this edition is taken from the reprinted Parma edition (New York, 1948). Citations from this and other works by St. Thomas will be made in standard form, with the reference appearing in full at its first occurrence.

[2]Cf. Etienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* (New York: Scribner, 1940), pp. 438–441, fn. 4; Anton Pegis, "A Note on St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 44, 1–2," *Mediaeval Studies* 8 (1946), 159–168; *St. Thomas and the Greeks* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1939) pp. 101–102, fn. 64; Cf.

James Anderson, *The Cause of Being: The Philosophy of Creation in St. Thomas* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1952).

[3]The dating is that of James A. Weisheipl, O.P., as found in a chapter entitled "A Brief Catalogue of Authentic Works", pp. 355–405 of his *Friar Thomas d'Aquino: His Life, Thought and Work*, 2nd ed. with *corrigenda* and *addenda* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1983). Note that Father Weisheipl changed his view as to the dating of certain works. See the appropriate pages in the *corrigenda* and *addenda*, pp. 465–487.

[4]Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in iv libros distinctae*, lib. 2, dist. 1, cap. 1, no. 1 (Grottaferrata [Rome]: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae Ad Claras Aquas, 1971), tomus 1, pars 2, p. 330. All translations are my own.

[5]Cf. *Prologomena: Glossae ordinariae*, PL 113:64 A-B.

[6]"Plato namque tria initia existimavit, Deum scilicet, et exemplar, et materiam; et ipsa increata, sine principio, et Deum quasi artificem, non creatorem." *Libri sententiarum*, lib. 2, d. 1, cap. 1, no. 2, p. 330, 11. 4–6.

[7]"Aristoteles vero duo dixit, scilicet materiam et speciem, et tertium "operatorium" dictum; mundum quoque semper esse et fuisse." *Libri sententiarum*, lib. 2, d. 1, cap. 3, no. 4, pp. 331, 11. 21–23.

[8]While the question of the eternity of the world is one that is closely allied with the question of creation, it is a question that the present article must forego. On the question of the eternity of the world in St. Thomas's thought, see John F. Wippel, "Did Thomas Aquinas Defend the Possibility of an Eternally Created World? (The *De aeternitate mundi* Revisited)," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 19 (1981) 21–37 (reprinted in John F. Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas* [Washington, DC, 1984], pp. 191–214); James A. Weisheipl, O.P., "The Date and Context of Aquinas's *De aeternitate mundi,"* in *Graceful Reason: Essays in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy Presented to Joseph Owens, C.Ss.R*. (Toronto, 1983), pp. 239–271.

[9]*"Plato namque tria initia existimavit*: sciendum quod in hoc Plato erravit, quia posuit formas exemplares per se subsistentes extra intellectum divinum, et neque ipsas neque materiam ad Deo esse habere." *In II Sent*., d. 1, *expositio textus*.

[10]*"Aristoteles vero duo principia dixit*: videtur imperfect tangere positionem ejus: quia ipse ponit tria principia in 1 *Phys*., materiam, formam, et privationem. Praeterea, ipse ponit non solum causam effectivam exemplarem, quae intelligitur per principium operatorium, sed etiam causam finalem. Praeterea, secundum ipsum, forma et agens et finis incidunt in idem, ut in 2 *Phys*. dicit, et ita videtur tantum duo principia posuisse. *In II Sent*., d. 1, *expositio textus*.

[11]"Ad quod dicendum quod Aristoteles non erravit in ponendo plura principia, qua posuit esse omnium tantum a primo principio dependere, et ita relinquitur unum esse primum principium. Erravit autem in positione aeternitatis mundi." *In II Sent*., d. 1, *expositio textus*.

[12]*Ibid*.: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod privatio non ponitur ab eo per se principium, sed per accidens; nec in esse rei, sed in fieri tantum."

[13]*Ibid*.: “Ad aliud dicendum quod secundum ipsum (Aristotelem) primum principium agens et ultimus finis reducuntur in idem numero, ut patet in 12 *Metaph*., ubi ponit quod primum principium movens movet ut desideratum ab omnibus.”

[14]*Ibid*.: “Ex quo sequitur quod sit unum principium primum extra rem, quod est agens et exemplar et finis, et duo quae sunt partes rel, scilicet forma et materia, quae ab illo primo principio producuuntur.”

[15]“Sed contra. Deus aut est causa substantiae mundi, aut non, sed motus ejus tantum. Si motus tantum, ergo ejus substantia non est creata: ergo est primum principium; et sic erunt plura prima principia et plura increata, quod supra improbatum est. Si autem est causa substantiae caeli, dans esse caelo; cum omne quod recipit esse ab aliquo, sequatur ipsum in duratione, videtur quod mundus non semper fuerit.” *In II Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, 1 *in contrarium*.

[16]“Et quia ad rationes in contrarium factas, quas dixi demonstrationes non esse, inveniuntur philosophorum responsiones; ideo quamvis verum concludant, ad eas etiam respondendum est, secundum quod ipsi philosophi respondent, ne alicui disputanti contra tenentes aeternitatem mundi ex improviso occurrant.” *In II Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, ad *in contrarium*.

[17]“…dicendum quod, sicut dicit Commentator in libro *De substantia orbis*, Aristoteles numquam intendit quod Deus esset causa motus caeli tantum, sed etiam quod esset causa substantiae ejus dans sibi esse. Cum enim sit finitae virtutis, eo quod corpus est, indiget aliquo agente infinitae virtutis, a quo et perpetuitatem motus habeat, et perpetuitatem essendi, sicut motum et esse. Non tamen ex hoc sequitur quod praecedat duratione: quia non est dans esse per motum, sed per influentiam aeternam, secundum quod scientia ejus est causa rerum. Et ex hoc quod scit ab aeterno et vult, sequitur res ab aeterno esse, sicut ex hoc quod sol est ab aeterna, sequitur quod radius ejus ab aeterno sit.” *In II Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, a. 5, ad 1 *in contrarium*.

[18]The Leonine text is found in *Sancti Thomae de Aquino: Opera Omnia* (Rome: Ad Sanctae Sabinae, 1979), vol. 42:245–257. Dondaine’s editorial introduction is found on pages 211–241.

[19]Anton C. Pegis, *St. Thomas and the Greeks* (Milwaukee, 1939), pp. 101–102, fn. 64. Pegis develops his views further in his article “A Note on St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 44, 1–2,” *Mediaeval Studies* 8 (1946), 159–168.

[20]*Sancti Thomae Aquinatis, Opuscula Omnia*, ed. P. Mandonnet (Paris: Lethielleux, 1927), vol. 3, p. 3.

[21]Cf. *Opera Omnia* (Paris: Vives, 1875), vol. 27, p. 172. Worthy of note is that this same reading is found in the Marietti edition of the *Opuscula Theologica* of St. Thomas, printed in 1954. Cf. *Opuscula Theologica, Vol. I: De re dogmatica et morali*, ed. R. Verardo, (Turin: Marietti, 1954), p. 142.

[22]Cf. the *apparatus critious in Opera Omnia* 42:246, 11. 116–119.

[23]Cf. Dondaine’s editorial introduction, vol. 42:235.

[24]“Secundus error est Platonis et Anaxagore, qui posuerunt mundum factum a Deo sed ex materia praeiacenti; contra quos dicitur in Psalmo “Mandavit et creata sunt”, id est ex nichilo facta.” *De articulis fidei et ecclesiae sacramentis*, Leon. ed., 42:246, 11. 112–115.

[25]"Tertius est error Aristotilis, qui posuit mundum a Deo factum sed ab eterno; contra quem dicitur Gen. I:1 "In principio creauit Deus celum et terram." *Ed. cit*, 11. 116–119.

[26]Cf. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, pp. 393–394; *Expositio super primam decretalem*, in *Opera Omnia* (Rome: Ad Sanctae Sabinae, 1968), vol. 40:E6.

[27]"Alius error fuit Aristotilis ponentis quidem omnia a Deo esse producta sed ab aeterno, et nullum fuisse principium temporis, cum tamen scriptum sit Gen. 1:1 "In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram"; et ad hoc excludendum addit *ab initio temporis." Expositio super primam decretalem*, 40:E35, 11. 432–437.

[28]St. Thomas Aquinas, *Questiones disputatae de potentia dei*, q. 3, a. 5, ed. P. Pession (Turin: Marietti, 1965), p. 49. The two other histories will be given below.

[29]"Posteriores vero philosophi, ut Plato, Aristoteles et eorum sequaces, pervenerunt ad considerationem ipsius esse universalis; et ideo ipsi soli posuerunt aliquam universalem causam rerum, a qua omnia alia in esse prodierent…" *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 5, *in corp*., p. 49.

[30]Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 44, a. 2, (Ottawa: Medieval Institute, 1943), vol. 1, pp. 280–281.

[31]"Utrique igitur consideraverunt ens particulari sub quadam consideratione, vel inquantum est hoc ens, vel inquantum est tale ens. Et sic rebus causas agentes particulares assignaverunt." *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 44, a. 2, *in corp., ed. cit*., 281a8–12.

[32]Cf. Etienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* (New York, 1940), pp. 438–441, fn. 4.

[33]Cf. B. H. Kennedy, *The Revised Latin Primer* (Hong Kong, 1962), p. 154, nos. 326–327. St. Thomas himself consistently uses *uterque* and *utrique* in this fashion. Cf. *Index Thomisticus*, ed. R. Busa, S.J. (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1979), section secunda, concordantia altera, vol. 6, pp. 374–375 (*uterque*); p. 382 (*utrique*).

[34]"Et ulterius aliqui erexerunt se ad considerandum ens inquantum est ens, et consideraverunt causam rerum, non solum secundum quod sunt haec vel talia, sed secundum quod sunt entia. Hoc igitur quod est causa rerum inquantum sunt entia, oportet esse causam rerum, non solum secundum quod sunt talia per formas accidentales, nec secundum quod sunt haec per formas substantiales, sed etiam secundum omne illud quod pertinet ad esse illorum quocumque modo…" *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 44, a. 2, 281 a 13–17.

[35]See above, texts 1–4, especially text 1.

[36]*In II Metaphysicorum*, lect. 2, ed. R. Spiazzi (Turin: Marietti, 1964), p. 85, no. 295.

[37]"…quae (corpora caelestia) etsi sint incorruptibilia, tamen habent causam non solum quantum ad suum moveri, ut quidam opinati sunt, sed etiam quantum ad suum esse, ut hic Philosophus expresse dicit." *In II Metaph*., no. 295.

[38]"Hae namque causae immateriales et immobiles sunt causae sensibilibus manifestis nobis, quia sunt maxime entia, et per consequens causae aliorum, ut in secundo libro ostensum est." *In VI*

Metaphysicorum, ed. cit., pp. 297–298, no. 1164. The Marietti editor does not give the precise reference to Book two, but it would appear to be to *Metaphysics* 2.1, 993b20–30, the text dealt with above, text number 7.

[39]"Et per hoc patet quod scientia quae huiusmodi entia pertractat, prima est inter omnes, et considerat communes causas omnium entium. Unde sunt causae entium secundum quod sunt entia, quae inquiruntur in prima philosophia…" ibid.

[40]"Ex hoc apparet manifeste falsitas opinionis illorum, qui posuerunt Aristotelem sensisse, quod Deus non sit causa substantiae caeli, sed solum motus eius" ibid.

[41]*Averroes Cordubensis, Commentarium in VIII Physicorum*, TC 4 (Venice: Apud Iunctas, 1562), fol. 341rc.

[42]"Quod etiam introducit de antiquis philosophorum opinionibus, efficaciam non habet: quia antiqui naturales non potuerunt pervenire ad causam primam totius esse, sed considerabant causas particularium mutationum. Quorum primi consideraverunt causas solarum mutationum accidentalium, ponentes omne fieri esse alterari: sequentes vero pervenerunt ad cognitionem mutationum substantialium: postremi vero, ut Plato et Aristoteles, pervenerunt ad cognoscendum principium totius esse." *In VIII Physicorum*, lect. 2, ed. P. Maggiolo (Turin: Marietti, 1965), p. 506, no. 975.

[43]"Sed si qui recte consideret, ex simili causa ipse [Averroes] deceptus fuit, ex qua causa nos deceptos arbitratur, scilicet ex consideratione particularium entium." *In VIII Physic*., no. 974.

[44]"Sic igitur patet quod non movemur ad ponendum aliquid fieri ex nihilo, quia reputemus ea esse solum entia quae sunt visibilia: sed magis e contrario, quia non consideramus solas productiones particulares a causis particularibus, sed productionem universalem totius esse a primo essendi principio." *In VIII Physic*., no. 975.

[45]*In VIII Physic*., no. 974.

[46]Cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, 8.1: 252a33–252b1.

[47]*In VIII Physic*., lect. 3, no. 996.

[48]Cf. Aristotle *Metaphysics* 2.1: 993b29–30.

[49]"Sicut igitur aliqua sunt semper vera et tamen habent causam suae veritatis, ita Aristoteles intellexit quod essent aliqua semper entia, scilicet corpora caelestia et substantiae separatae, et tamen haberent causam sui esse." *In VIII Physic*., no. 996.

[50]"Ex quo patet quod quamvis Aristoteles poneret mundum eternum, non tamen credidit quod Deus non sit causa essendi ipsi mundo, sed causa motus eius tantum, ut quidam dixerunt." *In VIII Physic*., no. 996.

[51]*De substantiis separatis*, in *Opera Omnia* (Rome: Ad Sanctae Sabinae, 1968), vol. 40:D58.

[52]"Non ergo aestimandum est quod Plato et Aristoteles, propter hoc quod posuerunt substantias immateriales seu etiam caelestia corpora semper fuisse, eis subtraxerunt causam essendi; non enim in

hoc a sententia fidei deviarunt quod huiusmodi posuerunt increata, sed quia posuerunt ea semper fuisse: cuius contrarium fides catholica tenet." *De substantiis separatis*, vol. 40:D58, 11. 215–222.

[53]Cf. *De caelo*, 1.4: 271a27–35.

[54]"Est autem attendendum quod Aristoteles hic ponit Deum esse factorem caelestium corporum, et non solum causam per modum finis, ut quidam dixerunt." *In I de caelo et mundo*, lect. 8, ed. *R. Spiazzi*, (Turin: Marietti, 1952), p. 43, no. 91.

[55]*In II Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, a. 2, *in corp*.,

[56]The reader will have noticed that Plato appeared in tandem with Aristotle in many of the texts that were dealt with here, and it seems to me that St. Thomas's teaching on Plato, unlike his teaching on Aristotle, may have undergone some change. In the *scriptum* on the *Sentences* St. Thomas was convinced that Plato held that matter was uncreated: *"Plato namque tria initia existimavit*: sciendum quod in hoc Plato erravit, quia posuit formas exemplares per se subsistentes extra intellectum divinum, et neque ipsas neque materiam ad Deo esse habere" (*In II Sent*., d. 1, *expositio textus*); But while St. Thomas repeats this judgement in *De articulis fidei* and in *Expositio super primam decretalem*, he makes a different claim in the *De potentia*: "Posteriores vero philosophi, ut Plato, Aristoteles et eorum sequaces, pervenerunt ad considerationem ipsius esse universalis; et ideo ipsi soli posuerunt aliquam universalem causam rerum, a qua omnia alia in esse prodierent…" (*De potentia*, q. 3, a. 5, *in corp*.); and then, in the first part of the *Summa theologiae*, q. 15, a. 3, ad 3, written perhaps a year or two after the *De potentia*, St. Thomas is guarded about whether Plato taught that matter was uncreated: "Dicendum quod Plato, *secundum quosdam*, posuit materiam non creatam…"; and ad 4: "…per materiam, quam (Plato) ponebat esse increatam, *ut quidam dicunt*…" (my italics).