

[**Question 2:** Whether there is any demonstrative syllogism.]

CONCERNING THE SECOND <QUESTION> **let it be asked** whether there is any demonstrative syllogism.

2.1. <**First principal argument**> **It seems there is not**, for if there were, it would seem that this syllogism at least would be a demonstrative syllogism, “every rational animal is able to laugh, every man is a rational animal; therefore every man is able to laugh.” But this is false, since in a demonstrative syllogism, and this in a demonstration of the highest sort, the premisses are better known than the conclusions.¹ But in this syllogism the premisses are not better known than the conclusion, since this major premise, “every rational animal is able to laugh,” is not better known than this conclusion, “every man is able to laugh.”

2.2. The assumption is clear, since this being known is on the part of the utterance, or on the part of the concept, or on the part of the reality. It is certain that it is not on the part of the utterance, since one utterance is not better known than another; nor on the part of the concept, as is obvious enough; nor on the part of the reality, since the same reality is signified by the definition and the definitum, and the same reality is not better known than itself. Therefore this major premise, “every rational animal is able to laugh,” is not better known in the reality than the conclusion, “every man is able to laugh,” since they are the same really.

2.3. It is replied to this argument that this greater being known is on the part of reality. And when it is argued, “the same reality is signified by the definition and the defined,” it is replied that this same reality is received, but under another real form and real consideration. Hence it is not absurd that the same reality under one consideration would be better known than itself under another consideration.

2.4. Against this, I ask about that consideration or real form, is it on the part of reality or on the part of the concept? It is certain that it is not on the part of the concept. But if it is on the part of the reality, the reality signified by the definition and the definitum will not be the same. It follows that the same reality will be better known than itself, which is absurd.

2.5. Moreover, if any *ratio* is a real *ratio* outside the soul, since whatever is real that is in the definition is in the definitum, it would follow that that real *ratio* will be in the definitum and in the reality signified by the

¹Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I 2 (71b20-22). The first principal argument here is found in William of Ockham, and in an earlier version in Giles of Rome.

definitum. If this is so, then this, “Every rational animal is able to laugh,” is not better known on the part of reality than this, “Every man is able to laugh.”

2.6. Moreover, it seems that something false is granted, that the reality signified by the definition and the definitum is the same, for the realities signified by the definition and the definitum are different, since the parts are different. For some parts are of the definitum, namely, matter and form, and others are parts of the definition, namely, genus and difference. And these are different parts, therefore the reality signified by the definition and that signified by the definitum are different.

2.7. Moreover, it seems that this proposition, “every rational animal is able to laugh,” is not better known than this, “every man is able to laugh,” on the part of reality, since if it were so, this would be true, “some reality signified by a definition is better known than the reality signified by the definitum.” And yet this is false, since from this together with something true something false follows. The argumentation is thus, in the third figure: “Some reality signified by a definition is better known than a reality signified by the definitum, every reality signified by the definition is a reality signified by the definitum; therefore <some> reality signified by the definitum is better known than a reality signified by the definitum.” The conclusion is false and the minor premise true, since it is the same reality signified by the definitum and the definition; therefore the major premise is false.

2.8. **Another <the second> principal argument:** If there is any demonstrative syllogism, this at least would seem to be, in these terms, as before, “every rational animal is able to laugh, every man is a rational animal; therefore every man is able to laugh.” But this syllogism is not a demonstrative syllogism, since according to the Philosopher in the beginning of the *Posterior Analytics*,² demonstration is from primary, true and immediate <premisses> etc.; but this syllogism is not from immediate premisses, therefore it is not a demonstrative syllogism.

2.9. The assumption is obvious, for this is not immediate, “every man is a rational animal,” since this definition “rational animal” can be shown of man using a middle term; for a less perfect definition can be shown of the definitum using a more perfect definition, since a material definition can be shown of the definitum using a formal definition.³ But now, it happens that there is some definition of man more perfect than this, “rational animal,” since a definition given from all four causes is more perfect than a definition given from the material

²Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I 2 (71b20-22).

³Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* II 9 (93b21-28); Thomas Aquinas, *In Libros Posteriorum Analyticorum* II lect. 7, n. 472; lect. 8, n. 481.

and formal cause.

2.10. Now I take a definition of man given from all four causes, let it be definition A. This then is a demonstration: “Every rational animal is A, therefore every man is a rational animal.” If this is so, then this conclusion is not immediate, but has a middle, for the conclusion in a demonstration has a middle.

2.11. That the definition given from all the causes is more perfect than the definition given from the formal and material cause alone is obvious, for that is a more perfect definition that leads to a more perfect cognition, and that is the most perfect definition that leads to the most perfect cognition; but a definition from all four causes leads us to a more perfect cognition of the reality than a definition given from only two causes, therefore a definition given from all four causes will be more perfect than a definition given from the material and formal cause alone. If this is so, then A will be a more perfect definition of man than “rational animal,” and consequently, “rational animal” can be shown of man using A as a middle term, since the more imperfect definition can be shown of the definitum using the more perfect definition.

2.12. **Another <the third> principal argument:** If there were any demonstrative syllogism, then it would be necessary for that syllogism to be demonstrative when it concluded an attribute of its proper subject.⁴ But, now, it happens that no subject has an attribute, since no species in the genus of substance has an attribute. For if any did, the species of man would. Man, then, has an attribute, his attribute is the ability to laugh. But the ability to laugh is a certain species in the genus of quality, therefore it has an attribute.⁵ Its attribute is to be sought, and it is a real, *per se* being, therefore it is in some genus. Not in the genus of quality, since attribute and subject are of different genera. Nor in the genus of quantity, and so on for the other genera., since it is certain that the attribute of the ability to laugh is not in another genus, as is clear enough from induction.

2.13. It must be replied to this that the attribute of the ability to laugh is in the same genus in which the ability to laugh is. Hence this, that the subject and attribute are of different genera, is to be understood only of substance of its attributes, but in the other genera there can very well be a subject and an attribute in the same genus.

2.14. Against this: If the ability to laugh and its proper attribute are in the same genus, let their proper attribute be A. If A is in the genus of quality, either A is an individual, or a species, or a genus, or a difference. Not an individual, for an individual in a genus is not a proper attribute of any species of that genus.

⁴Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I 7 (75a39-75b2).

⁵Cf. John of Cornwall (Ps. Scotus), *Super Primum Posteriorum* Q. 27.

If it is a species, it is, then, either a species unrelated to the ability to laugh, or it is a species ordered together with it. If it is an unrelated species, then is it not its proper attribute, since one species unrelated to another of the same genus is not an attribute of that species, for an attribute is predicated of that to which it belongs, but an unrelated species of the same genus is not predicated of what it bears no relation to. If it is a species ordered with it, then one species includes the other per se and essentially. If this is so, then it is not its attribute, for an attribute is not of the essence of that to which it belongs. Nor is it a genus. For either the genus is separate, or it is a genus ordered with the species. If the genus is ordered, it will not be its attribute. If the genus is separate, it will not be its attribute, since it is not predicated of it. Nor is it a difference in the genus of quality, for the same reason. Therefore it seems that that attribute is not in a genus. Therefore it is said that the ability to laugh does not have an attribute.

2.15. Against this: The ability to laugh is a *per se* species in the genus of quality, and so it is a *per se* species, like triangle; therefore by the same reason by which one species has an attribute, another will also have one. Therefore by the same reason By which a triangle has an attribute, the ability to laugh also has one.⁶

2.16. Moreover, this proposition seems obvious, that every species that is *per se* in a genus has an attribute; since, then, the ability to laugh is *per se* a species in the genus of quality, therefore the ability to laugh has an attribute. Therefore it is said that the ability to laugh has an attribute and that its attribute is not in the genus except through reduction.

2.17. Against this: Let its attribute be A as before.⁷ A is a real being outside the soul, since it is an attribute of a real species, and it is not a being accidentally, for then it would not be an attribute of any species; therefore it is a being *per se*. If it is a being *per se* and it is not a substance, nor a quantity, nor a relation, and so on for the other categories except for quality, then A is a quality and in the genus of quality, either *per se* or through reduction. If *per se*, we have what was proposed. If through reduction, then it has to be reduced to some species in the genus of quality, therefore either to the ability to laugh or to another species. Not to another species, that is certain, nor to the ability to laugh, for an attribute cannot be reduced to the species of which it is an attribute.

2.18. **Another <the fourth> principal argument:** If anything were a demonstrative syllogism, it would either be composed of words, or concepts, or realities. Not from words, since demonstration is from

⁶Cf. John of Cornwall (Ps. Scotus), *Super Primum Posteriorum* Q. 27.

⁷Section 1.42.

what is everlasting and necessary,⁸ but if it were composed from words, and it were assumed that no word is, then not demonstration would be. Nor from concepts, since it would either be from my concepts, or your concepts, for every concept is mine, or yours, or his, and so on through all the individual possibilities (*et sic de singulis*). It is not composed from my concepts, for then demonstration would not be from necessary things. In the same way, then demonstration will not be from the parts of speech, for a concept is not a part of speech, since a part of speech signifies a concept mentally. Nor is it composed from realities, for it is composed from propositions and parts of speech. But not it happens that a proposition is not composed from realities, since then this proposition, “The tale of a lion is the head of a dragon,” would be a chimera; nor is it composed from parts of speech, since a reality outside, such as horse or ox, is not a part of speech.

2.19. Moreover, if demonstration were composed from realities, a demonstrative syllogism would be a being outside the soul. The consequent is false, for it is a being which is true, and a being which is true is in the soul.

2.20. Moreover, if “Every rational animal is capable of laughter, every man is a rational animal; therefore etc.,” is composed from realities, <it would not be a demonstration>, since demonstration is from what is better known and prior.⁹ But this major premise, “Every rational animal is capable of laughter,” is not, on the part of reality, better known than this conclusion, “Every man is capable of laughter,” since the reality signified by one is the same as the reality signified by the other.

2.21. **On the other hand**, it is obvious that there is some demonstrative syllogism, for demonstrative syllogism is when the proper attribute is concluded of its proper subject using a definition as a middle term.¹⁰ It is thus here: “Every rational animal is capable of laughter, every man is a rational animal; therefore etc.” Therefore it is a demonstrative syllogism. And consequently, if this syllogism is a demonstrative syllogism, then some syllogism is a demonstrative syllogism.

2.22 <2.36>. **In response to the second question**, it must be replied that some syllogism is a demonstrative syllogism, since a demonstrative syllogism or demonstration occurs when the proper attribute is concluded of the subject through a definition as the middle term. In the same way, according to the Philosopher in the *Posterior Analytics*,¹¹ demonstration is a syllogism causing scientific knowing. In the same way,

⁸Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I 30, 87b19-27.

⁹Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I 2, 71b20-22.

¹⁰Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* II 2, 89b35-90a2.

¹¹Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I 2, 71b17-18.

demonstration is from the primary and true, etc. But in this syllogism, “Every rational animal is able to laugh, every man is a rational animal, therefore etc.,” a proper attribute is concluded of its subject using a definition as the middle term. In the same way, this syllogism is a syllogism producing scientific knowing and it is from primary, true, etc. propositions, therefore this syllogism is a demonstrative syllogism, and it is a syllogism; therefore some syllogism is a demonstrative syllogism. And through this the arguments are answered.

2.23 <2.37>. **In response to the first <principal> argument**, when it is argued, if any syllogism is a demonstrative syllogism, this syllogism is a demonstrative syllogism, “Every rational animal is able to sense, every man is a rational animal, therefore etc.,” one replies by granting the conclusion. And when it is argued, “In demonstration the premisses are better known than the conclusions,” it is granted when there is a demonstration of the highest sort and a demonstration why it is so.¹² And when it is argued, “This being better known is either on the part of the reality, or on the part of the concept, or on the part of the utterance,” it is replied that it is on the part of the reality. [2.1-2]

2.24 <2.38>. And when it is argued, “The same reality is signified through the definition and the definitum, but the same reality is not better known than itself,” it must be held that it is not absurd for the same reality under one real consideration to be better known than itself under some other real consideration. Indeed, this is necessary, for the same reality is signified by the definition and the defined, and the same reality is signified by “rational animal” and “man,” but it is taken under another formal *ratio*. [2.3]

2.25 <2.39>. For I take that reality, and that reality under one formal *ratio* is signified by the definition, and under another formal *ratio* it is signified by the definitum; therefore the formal significatum of the definition is other than that of the definitum, but they are the same materially. Hence a reality under that formal *ratio* under which it is signified through the definition is better known than the reality taken under that formal *ratio* under which it is signified by the definitum. Therefore, on the part of reality, this knowledge is greater, “Every rational animal is able to laugh,” than this, “Every man is able to laugh,” notwithstanding that the same reality is signified by “rational animal” and “man,” since that reality is taken under a different formal *ratio* and a different real *ratio*. Hence the same reality taken under one real consideration and under one formal *ratio* is better known than it is taken under another formal *ratio*. [2.4]

2.26 <2.40>. In response to the argument to the contrary [2.5], one replies by denying this <proposition>, “Everything real that is in the reality signified by the definition is in the definitum,” if a distinction arises from a real *ratio*. Now if the distinction arises only for a real being, as distinguished from a

¹²Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I 13, 78a22-30. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *In libros Posteriorum* I, lectio 23.

real *ratio*, thus it can be granted; and so it is not to the point.

2.27 <2.41>. One can reply in another way, granting this, “Everything real that is in the definition is in the definitum.” And let B be a formal *ratio* under which the reality is signified through its definition, then this line of argument is granted, “Everything real that is in the definition is in the defined, B is in the definition, therefore B is in the definitum.” The conclusion is granted, for B is in the reality signified by the definition as a formal *ratio*, and it is in the reality signified by the definitum as a concomitant *ratio*.

2.28 <2.42>. To the other argument to the contrary, [2.6] it is replied that the parts of the definitum are two-fold, natural parts and metaphysical parts. The natural parts are such as matter and form, the metaphysical parts are such as genus and difference, and as the reality signified through the genus and the reality signified through the difference. In the same way the parts of a definition are twofold, natural and metaphysical. Natural parts are such as matter and form—for according to the Commentator on *Metaphysics* VII matter pertains to quiddity¹³—and metaphysical parts are such as genus and difference. And so it is clear that the parts of the definition and the definitum are the same, for the natural parts are the same, and in the same way, the metaphysical parts are the same.

2.29 <2.43>. In response to the other argument to the contrary, [2.7] it is replied by denying this, “Every reality signified by the definition is in the reality signified through the definitum,” since, notwithstanding that one reality under one formal *ratio* is a reality signified by the definition and that under the other formal *ratio* is the reality signified by the definitum, now this is false, “The reality signified by the definition is the reality signified by the definitum,” for this reality under this formal *ratio* is not that reality under the other formal *ratio*.

2.30 <2.44–46>. **As to the other principal argument**, [2.8-11] it should be replied that this is immediate, “Every man is a rational animal.” As for the proof, when it is argued, “‘Rational animal’ can be shown of man through another definition, namely through the definition given through all four causes,” one answers by denying that. As for the proof, “Every more imperfect definition can be shown of the defined through a more perfect definition,” one replies by denying this universal proposition, for that argument proves that both parts of the definition can be shown of the definitum, and consequently, this is not immediate, “Man is an animal.”

¹³Averroës, who in fact takes the opposite view of the matter. *In libros Metaphysicorum* VII 5, t.c. 21, f. 171vI; t.c. 34, f. 184rD-E. Compare Thomas Aquinas, *In libros Metaphysicorum* VII, lectio 9.

2.31 <2.47>. The assumption is obvious, for a definition is more perfect than its part. Therefore this is denied, “Every definition more imperfect can be shown of the defined through a more perfect definition.” But if it has truth, then it will be true of definitions that are ordered. Therefore a material definition can be shown of the definitum through a formal definition, which is the more perfect definition, since a material definition is ordered in a way to formal definition. But a definition given through genus and difference is not ordered with a definition given through all four causes; therefore, notwithstanding that there is a more perfect definition than a definition given through all four causes, it still cannot be shown of the definitum through the more perfect definition.

2.32 <2.48>. **As for the other principal argument**, [2.12-17] it must be held that man has a proper attribute. And when it is argued “Let that attribute be the ability to laugh, then that attribute is in the genus of quality, and it is *per se* a species of quality,” the conclusion is granted. And then, when it is argued “It is *per se* a species in the genus of quality, therefore it has an attribute,” it is replied that this is not so, for not every species has an attribute, as is clear in many species of different genera, but some species have attributes and some do not. Nor does every species in the genus of quality have an attribute. In another way, it can be replied that the ability to laugh, which is *per se* a species in the genus of quality, has an attribute, and that this attribute is not directly in the genus, nor *per se* a species in a genus, but it is only in the genus through reduction, and therefore it is necessary that that attribute should have an attribute.

2.33 <2.49>. **As for the other principal argument**, [2.18-20] when it is argued, “Either a demonstrative syllogism is composed of utterances, or of concepts, or of realities,” it must be replied that just as a proposition can be taken materially from which it is composed, thus in the same way with syllogism. For some propositions are proposed merely, and that proposition is called a proposition passively; and some propositions both propose and are proposed. A proposition in the first way is said to be composed from realities by an intellectual composition, and not by a real composition; and in this way a proposition is taken as what is designated (*signato*). A proposition said in the second way is composed from significant utterances, and in this way a proposition is taken as a sign. A proposition taken in a third way is composed from concepts. In the same way, a demonstrative syllogism can be taken as what is designated or as a sign. If it is taken as what is designated merely, thus a demonstrative syllogism is called a syllogism passively. In this way it is composed from realities by an intellectual composition, and not by a real composition. If demonstrative syllogism is taken as a sign, thus it is composed from significant utterances or from concepts.

2.34 <2.50>. As to the argument that proves that it is not composed from utterances or concepts,

since a demonstration is from what is necessary, it must be replied that demonstrative syllogism taken as a sign is not composed from what is necessary unless “necessary” is taken as a necessary sign; and thus it is granted that it is composed of necessary things, since it is composed of necessary signs.

2.35 <2.51>. As for the argument that proves that it is not composed from realities, since if it were, a proposition would be a chimaera, it is replied that this is not necessary, since in this proposition, “The tale of a lion is the head of a dragon,” notwithstanding that this proposed proposition is only composed from realities, this composition is only an intellectual or intelligible composition. And therefore, it does not follow that it is a chimaera, since it is not indicated that there is any real composition.

2.36 <2.52>. **As to the other**, it is granted that a part of speech is a reality outside, taking “part of the conclusion” only as what is designated.

2.37 <2.53>. **As for the last**, one replies by denying this consequence, “It is composed from realities, therefore it is a reality outside the soul.” For this composition is not a real composition, but intelligible or intellectual composition. Hence the syllogism is not a being per se nor a being accidentally, but is contained under the middle term of the division of being, namely under true being.¹⁴ Hence demonstrative syllogism is composed from realities and does not have being as a subject in the soul, nor being as a subject outside the soul, but only has being objectively. Whether this response is good, will become clear elsewhere.

¹⁴Compare *Metaphysics* VI 4, 1027b29-1028a6.