

Notes from Patton, *Verhouding Tussen Zijn En Wesenheid*

On p. 189, note 12, he notes that Simon refers to Thomas Aquinas as the Expositor, particularly of the *Posterior Analytics*, but also of other books. So, as noted on p. 243, note 3, in D. Sharp (ed.), *Questiones super Tertium De Anima*, p. 330, “*Expositor dicit Contra Gentiles. . .*”

Pp. 243-246 on Simon of Faversham, loose translation (thanks to John Van Dijk):

“Simon of Faversham ca. 1240-1306: Concerning the scientific career of Simon of Faversham, secular cleric, we possess only a few pieces of information. Most likely he taught the *artes* at Paris, after which he took a chair at Oxford. There he taught theology as *magister actu regens*, became chancellor of the university in 1304, and died in 1306. All the writings which we possess from his hand are commentaries of the works of Aristotle. His teaching is Aristotelian in structure. At various places in his work he cites Thomas Aquinas and takes over various important points from Thomism. With Thomas he rejects the matter and form composition in spiritual substances, considers matter as pure potentiality, and accepts the doctrine of the essential form and the *distinctio realis* between essence and existence. Although the influence of Simon of Faversham on scholasticism remained exceedingly slight, and one can hardly point to a trace of his thought in the 13th and 14th centuries, nevertheless he appears important for the study of the real distinction because he was one of the first at Oxford who taught the real distinction and on this point experienced noticeably the influence of Thomas Aquinas.

“In the edition of Simon’s *Questions super libros Praedicamentorum* by C. Ottaviano one finds a very interesting point, namely, “whether the substance which is a most general genus is simple or composite substance.”

“Simon begins his exposition with the remark that one can take independence in three different ways: either one considers substance as a highest genus concept to which all the lower, subordinate, genera and kinds of things can be led back, and then substance is completely simple, since it cannot be led back any more to a higher genus; or if we consider substance in its pure essential conceptual content, then it is neither simple nor complex, for if the content of the concept of substance were simple we then would not be able to apply the concept of independence to complex beings. Were it on the contrary complex, then the concept of substance would not be sayable of simple beings. In its concrete realizations, however, substance is both simple and complex:

If it is considered as to its real being, thus I hold that it is simple and composite. For a genus in real being is nothing other than all of its species; now that substance which is the most general genus is related of simple and composite substance as a genus to its species, and there in real being it is both simple and composite.

“So substance here is not taken as a logical thought-pattern, but as concrete reality. Now then, one must admit that substance, taken in this way, is simple when it concerns purely spiritual beings, and that it is complex when it concerns corporeal independences. Therefore a simple substance is a substance which does not have the structure of form and matter, although it nevertheless is composed, in a different order, of existence and essence.

That substance, therefore, which is a category is not some composite from matter and form, but is *composed from something material and something formal, or from essence and existence*. Every substance other than the First is composed of essence and existence; and therefore every substance other than the first is contained in the category of substance. (P. 283, 24-28)

And so that substance which is the most general genus is *composed from essence and existence*. (*Ibid.* 36-37)

Intelligences are in a way simple, and in a way composite. They are simple because they are not composed of matter and form, *but they are composites of essence and existence*. (P. 284, 28-30)

And therefore that substance which is the most general genus is simple in this way, because composition from matter and form are not included in its formula, *but it only includes composition of essence and being*. (P. 285, 4-6)

“In order to prove this thesis Simon of Faversham develops an argument which he undoubtedly must have found in the little work of Thoms, *De Esse et Essentia* [In his footnotes he compares the following passage to Chapter 4 of that work]:

Next it must be noted that although everything that is contained in the category of substance is composed from essence and existence, still some of these, in addition to being composed from essence and existence, are also composed of matter and form. And such are generable and destructible, and are called composite substances. Others are composed only from essence and existence, and such are called simple substances. Insofar, then, as we say that substance is the most general genus it contains under it both simple and composite substances, since it contains composite substance composed from matter and form, and that which is composed only from essence and existence and not from matter and form. Both can be explained. And first it is explained that it is not composed from matter and form, for an intelligence is an intellectual nature to a higher degree than our intellect. Now our intellect is assumed immaterial to understand all things, and therefore the Philosopher says in *De Anima* III that it is necessary for our intellect to be unmixed, so that it can understand all things. Since, then, intelligences are the highest intellectual substances, they must be immaterial, simple, and not composed from matter and form. But they are composed from essence and existence. The proof of this is, that it pertains to the what it is of something not to be caused in it through anything extrinsic, since then that what it is would be demonstrable of that of which it is. But being is created in an intelligence from something extrinsic, namely from the First Existent, and the intelligence is in a receptive potency to that existence. Therefore the existence of an intelligence is not in its essence, and so it is composed from essence and existence. That what he says in the ninth proposition of *De Causis*, that an intelligence has existence and form, understanding form as whatness. Therefore it appears that substance which

is a most general genus is something composite, not composed from matter and form, but from a reality and a manner of being added to it. (P. 284, 1-26)

“The last sentence of this text must not make us think of a kind of *distinctio modalis*, because “composed from a reality and a manner of being added to it” has to be understood as follows according to Simon:

Everything which is contained in the category of substance is composed from two, namely from the reality and the manner of accidental existence added to it. Hence these two integrate the category, namely reality and form. I call the form the manner of existing which must belong to the reality. Therefore the category of substance is constituted from the reality and a form or manner of existing, which is existing not in another, for the Philosopher says in the text that is a property of every substance not to be in a subject. (P. 283, 18-24)

“In another passage he characterizes being as *something additional*, an *accident* of essence.

And therefore in every substance other than the First, *existence is added to essence*. And since its substance stands under its existence, its substance stands under an accident, *since existence in them is an accident of essence*. (P. 278, 18-21)

“So Simon of Faversham exhibits himself as a proponent of the real distinction between substance and its act of existing, for substance is potency over against what it receives and what does not belong to its essence. Now then this is the case with existence, which it has received from God. Therefore, existence cannot belong to the inner components of essence, and therefore it must be added as an accident to essence.”

Page 261: “In spite of the sharp criticism which the Pseudo-Grosseteste directed against the real distinction, this thesis was stubbornly defended, shortly after the death of St. Thomas Aquinas, by Simon of Faversham and some of Thomas’s brothers who had known him personally in Paris or had heard of his fame. The most important among them was Thomas of Sutton.”

[See C.K.McKeon, *A Study of the Summa Philosophiae of the Pseudo-Grosseteste* (New York: 1948).]