

BETWEEN TRANSCENDENTAL AND TRANSCENDENTAL: THE MISSING LINK?

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I

IN THE SECOND EDITION (1787) of his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, in the Transcendental Analytic, just after the Table of Categories and just before his Deduction of the Pure Concepts of Understanding, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) added a section (*Abschnitt* 12, B113–14) which marked at once the deficiency of an older Scholastic doctrine of transcendentals and yet arguably an adumbration of his own doctrine.¹ He expressed his core thought thus:

In the transcendental philosophy of the ancients there is included yet another chapter containing pure concepts of the understanding which, though not enumerated among the categories, must, on their view, be ranked as a priori concepts of objects. . . . They are propounded in the proposition, so famous among the Schoolmen, *quodlibet ens est unum, verum, bonum*. . . . These supposedly transcendental predicates of things are in fact, nothing but logical requirements and criteria of all knowledge of things in general, and prescribe for such knowledge the categories of quantity, namely, unity, plurality, and totality.²

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¹To one well known commentator this section seems to be “of no intrinsic importance”; see Norman Kemp Smith, *A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, 2d ed., revised and enlarged (Atlantic Highland, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1992), 200.

²“Es findet sich aber in der Transzendentalphilosophie der Alten noch ein Hauptstück vor, welches reine Verstandesbegriffe enthält, die, ob sie gleich nicht unter die Kategorien gezählt werden, dennoch, nach ihnen, als Begriffe *a priori* von Gegenständen gelten sollten. . . . Diese trägt der unter den Scholastikern so berufene Satz vor: *quodlibet ens est unum, verum, bonum*. . . . Diese vermeintlich transzendente Prädikate der Dinge sind nichts anders als logische Erfordernisse und Kriterien aller *Erkenntnis* der Dinge überhaupt, und legen ihr die Kategorien der Quantität, nämlich der *Einheit*, *Vielheit* und *Allheit* zum Grunde. . . .”; *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B113–14, in *Immanuel Kant: Werke in zehn Bänden*, ed. Wilhelm Weischedel, 10 vols. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968), 3:123–4. The translation is by Norman Kemp Smith, in *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (London: Macmillan, 1958), 118.

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Among later commentators, the setting of Kant's *Abschnitt* within the *Kritik*, as well as the wider question of a link between Kantian transcendentals and earlier teaching, have gained some attention. Thus, near the turn of this century, relying particularly on earlier work of Benno Erdmann,³ Hans Leisegang showed both some continuity of the Scholastic doctrine with Kant's precritical teaching and a possible anticipation in that doctrine of the structure of the *Kritik* itself.⁴ As Leisegang saw it, the Scholastic transcendentals had been taken over successively by Christian Wolff (1679–1754) in his *Ontologia* and then by Alexander Baumgarten (1714–1762), whose *Metaphysica* was at the base of Kant's precritical lectures on metaphysics.⁵ It was then Baumgarten's divisions of metaphysics, themselves taken from Wolff, which were transformed into the architectonic of Kant's critical philosophy.⁶

"Transcendental," says Leisegang, was one of the those terms which Kant borrowed from the vocabulary of earlier philosophy and then changed for his own purposes.⁷ The earlier vocabulary was reflected in Baumgarten's conception of ontology or metaphysics as "the science of the general predicates of being."⁸ Leisegang, correctly I believe, observes that Baumgarten's understanding of such predicates itself reflected medieval doctrine, especially that of Duns Scotus

³ See esp.: "Die Entwicklungsperioden von Kants theoretischer Philosophie," in *Reflexionen Kants zur Kritik der reinen Vernunft (Reflexionen Kants zur kritischen Philosophie, Band 2, aus Kants handschriftlichen Aufzeichnungen)*, ed. Benno Erdmann (Leipzig: Fues's Verlag, 1884), xiii–lx.

⁴ See Hans Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung des scholastischen Satzes: 'Quodlibet ens est unum, verum, bonum seu perfectum' und seine Bedeutung in Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft," *Kant-Studien* 20, no. 4 (1915): 403–21.

⁵ "Die Transzendentalia der Scholastik (oder auch die Transzendentalia) werden dann in der Wolffsche Ontologie, die den ersten Teil seiner Metaphysik bildet, übernommen, und so finden wir sie auch in dem Baumgartenschen Handbuch wieder, das Kant seinen Vorlesungen über Metaphysik zu Grunde legte"; Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 406. For Baumgarten, see *Metaphysica Alexandri Baumgarten professoris philosophiae (Halae Magdeburgicae: Impensis Carol. Herman. Hemmerde, 1779; reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1963)*.

⁶ See Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 404. The text appears in note 10.

⁷ "Der Begriff des Transzendentalen gehört zu denen, die Kant aus dem ihm überlieferten Wortschatz philosophischer Kunstausdrücke übernommen und zum Zwecke seiner kritischen Philosophie in seinem Gedankengehalt umgeformt hat"; Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 405.

⁸ "Ontologia (ontosophia, metaphysica, metaphysica universalis, architectonica, philosophia prima) est scientia praedicatorum entis generalium"; Alexander Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, 3d ed. (Halae Magdeburgicae, 1750), sec. 4, p. 2, as cited by Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 407.

(1266–1308).⁹ Leisegang has further remarked Kant's initial high regard for Baumgarten's metaphysics, its influence on the architectonic of his critical writings, and yet his gradual growing away from it.¹⁰ Thus, while the transcendentals of the Scholastics, of Wolff, and of Baumgarten may have endured in the structure of the *Kritik*, their doctrine itself had at last no substantive use for Kant.¹¹ Indeed, *Ab-schnitt* 12 appears to be Kant's final rejection of the basic ideas of the old ontology.¹² Although Leisegang afterwards revised and added to his work,¹³ his principal thesis remained intact.

While Norbert Hinske disagreed with Leisegang on the role of the transcendentals in Baumgarten's philosophy,¹⁴ he too rejected Baumgarten's influence here on the content of Kant's doctrine.¹⁵ For Hinske it was Wolff's "transcendental cosmology,"¹⁶ (with emphasis on its a

⁹ "Das ist im wesentlichen noch ganz dieselbe Gliederung, wie wir sie in der Scholastik, z. B. bei Duns Scotus, fanden, und auch die Bedeutung der Transzendentalia ist keine andere geworden"; Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 408. For a recent article on the first appearance of the medieval doctrine of transcendentals, see Jan A. Aertsen, "The Beginning of the Doctrine of the Transcendentals in Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1230)," *Mediaevalia, textos e estudos*, 7–8 (1995): 269–86. On Scotus's doctrine of the transcendentals, see Alan B. Wolter, *The Transcendentals and their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1946).

¹⁰ "Wie Kant selbst in dieser Metaphysik zu Hause war und in ihr lebte, um allmählich über sie hinauszuwachsen, davonzeugen die von B. Erdmann herausgegebenen Reflexionen. Kant hat einmal diese Metaphysik hoch geschätzt. Aus ihr hat er nicht nur die ganze Architektonik seiner kritischen Schriften übernommen, sondern auch viele Gedanken und vor allem fast alle seine philosophischen Kunstaussprüche, denen er allerdings meist einen neuen, seinen Zwecken entsprechenden Sinn gegeben hat"; Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 404.

¹¹ "Wie aber nun Kant die Nutzlosigkeit dieser Bemühung, die alte Ontologie mit ihren drei universellen und inneren Prädikatendes Seins für seine kritischen Zwecke auszubeuten, eingesehen und den Grund der Ergebnislosigkeit dieser Versuche erkannt hat, geht klar aus dem Manuskript seiner Vorlesungen über Metaphysik in der 70er Jahren hervor, . . ."; Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 416–17; see also 418–21.

¹² "Die letzte und endgültig abschliessende Auseinandersetzung mit den Grundbegriffen der alten Ontologie bringt dann der §12 der zweiten Auflage der Kritik der reinen Vernunft"; Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 420–1.

¹³ Leisegang, *Denkformen* (Berlin/Leipzig: W. de Gruyter, 1928), esp. 261–78.

¹⁴ See Norbert Hinske, *Kants Weg zur Transzendentalphilosophie* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1970), 56.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹⁶ See Christian Wolff, *Cosmologia generalis, methodo scientifica pertractata, qua ad solidam imprimis Dei atque naturae, cognitionem via teritur*, §1 (Francofurti et Lipsiae: Libraria Rengeriana, 1737; reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964), p. 1.

priori character) which itself broke with the earlier Scholastic tradition, and was linked especially to Kant's use of the term "transcendental."¹⁷

Hinske's views were challenged in a short article published in 1972 by Ignacio Angelelli, who argued that "a far more interesting 'link' is to be found in Baumgarten."¹⁸ Angelelli pointed to Baumgarten's doctrine of the transcendental unity of essences conceived as pluralities of predicates "held together" in a nonaccidental way.¹⁹ In this he saw the Scholastic doctrine of properties flowing from an essence, which then seemed plausibly reflected in Kant's synthetic a priori and in the entire transcendental philosophy.²⁰ Conceive unity, truth, and goodness as the properties of every essence and shift perspective from things in themselves to the knower, and it becomes "not implausible to think of Kant as such a reader of Baumgarten, who replaces the unity of essence, *apperceptibilis* in the outside reality by the unity of *apperception*, and regards the latter as the true explanation of objects and scientific knowledge."²¹

The next year, Hinske replied that while Angelelli might have shown how Kant's acceptance of the term "transcendental" could have occurred, there is no evidence in the history of ideas for any such *de facto* influence of Baumgarten.²² Angelelli answered that he was not asserting such influence but was only affirming its plausibility.²³

Kant's *Abschnitt* was taken up again in 1983 by Cornelio Fabro in an article comparing Kant's doctrine with that of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274).²⁴ Fabro saw the Kantian reduction of Scholastic tran-

¹⁷*Kants Weg*, 54–6; also see Norbert Hinske, "Die historischen Vorlagen der Kantischen Transzendentalphilosophie," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 12 (1968): 86–113, esp. 98–106.

¹⁸ See Ignacio Angelelli, "On the Origins of Kant's 'Transcendental,'" *Kant-Studien* 63 (1972): 117–22, esp. 119.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 120.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 120–1. I have difficulty with this when I recall Kant's example of a purely analytic judgment, namely, "All bodies are extended" ("*alle Körper sind ausgedehnt*"), *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A7/B11, in *Werke*, 3:52.

²¹ Angelelli, "On the Origins," 121.

²² See esp. "Sie zeigt, wie die Übernahme des Terminus durch Kant *möglicherweise hätte geschehen können*. Ihr einziger wesentlicher Mangel ist, dass die Begriffsgeschichte *de facto* anders verlaufen ist"; Norbert Hinske, "Kants Begriff des Transzendentalen und die Problematik seiner Begriffsgeschichte, Erwiderung auf Ignacio Angelelli," *Kant-Studien* 64 (1973): 58.

²³ Ignacio Angelelli, "On 'Transcendental' Again," *Kant-Studien* 66 (1975): 116–20, esp. 118–19.

²⁴ Cornelio Fabro, "Il trascendentale moderno e il trascendentale tomistico," *Angelicum* 60 (1983): 534–58.

scendentals to three as going back to Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548–1617).²⁵ Also derived from Suárez, through Christian Wolff,²⁶ was an essentialist emphasis on the role of unity among these three.²⁷ In contrast to St. Thomas, the starting point for Kant's conception was (quantitative²⁸) *unity* rather than *being*.²⁹ In connection with this, Fabro remarks between Kant and St. Thomas a complete reversal of the relationship between the perceiver and the perceived, a reversal which carries over to the sphere of the transcendentals. While Kant, entangled with a starting point in unity, was not able to ground thought in being (which is initially perceived through the senses), St. Thomas affirms that contact with being is the first step for thought.³⁰ For Fabro, "Kant's error" (and that of "decadent Scholasticism") was in basing himself on abstract essence (*essentia*) rather than being

²⁵ "Questi trascendentali, che gli Scolastici chiamano di solito *passiones entis*, sono da Suarez ridotti a tre: *unum, verum, bonum*, con la dominanza dell'*unum* e Kant si mette perciò nella linea di Suarez"; Fabro, "Il trascendentale," 536. Fabro here (note 7) cites Suárez from *Disputationes metaphysicae*, (hereafter, "DM" followed by disputation, section, and paragraph numbers, with volume and page number from his *Opera omnia* in parentheses) 3.2.3 (25:108): "Passiones entis sunt tres tantum . . . scilicet unum, verum, et bonum"; Francisco Suárez, *Opera omnia*, ed. Carolus Berton (Paris: Vivès, 1869). Contrast St. Thomas, for whom "the modes following upon being (*ens*) are *res, unum, aliquid, verum* and *bonum*, in *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 1, in S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Quaestiones disputatae*, ed. Reymundus Spiazzi, 8th ed., 2 vols. (Taurini: Marietti, 1949), 1:1–4.

²⁶ Fabro, "Il trascendentale," 536.

²⁷ ". . . la prima di queste note essenziali è indicata nello *unum* e ciò significa che l'essenza ha preso il posto dell'*ens* e ch'essa raccoglie nelle sue note essenziali tutto il contenuto del reale, . . ."; Fabro, "Il trascendentale," 537.

²⁸ This, for St. Thomas, was quite distinct from "the one which is converted with being (*unum quod convertitur cum ente*)"; see *Summa theologiae* I, q. 11, a. 1, ad 1, 3d ed. (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1961), 1: 65.

²⁹ "Quindi non l'*ens* come in S. Tommaso, ma l'*unum* è il punto di partenza ed il momento di struttura del trascendentale kantiano"; Fabro, "Il trascendentale," 537.

³⁰ "Al capovolgimento fenomenologico delle funzioni percettive Tommaso fa corrispondere il capovolgimento della sfera dei trascendentali. Mentre Kant—e con lui l'immanentismo moderno impegnato con l'*unum*—non è riuscito a fondare il rapporto del pensiero all'essere, Tommaso afferma che 1) *il contatto dell'essere con l'ente è il primo passo del pensiero*: 'Ens et essentia sunt quae primo intellectu concipiuntur' (*De ente* 1); 'Ens est illud quod primum cadit in conceptione humana' (*In Boeth. De Trinitate* I, 3 ad 3)"; Fabro, "Il trascendentale," 550.

(*ens*), then equating essence with unity, and going on to derive truth and goodness as modalities of unity.³¹

Although interpretations of the relation between Scholastic transcendentals and Kant evidently vary,³² Kant's own estimate of such transcendentals seems clear. "These supposedly transcendental predicates of things are, in fact, nothing but logical requirements and criteria of all knowledge of things in general. . . ."³³ Moreover, "they [the Scholastics] most unguardedly changed these criteria of thought into properties of objects as things in themselves."³⁴ Thus, while the Scholastics (whether one thinks of St. Thomas or of "decadent Scholasticism") evidently believed transcendentals to be most general properties of things in themselves, Kantian transcendentals are on the side of knowledge. In effect, they are a priori conditions presupposed by the very enterprise of knowing.³⁵

Accordingly, any link of the two conceptions ought to come, either from the side of Kant or from the side of the Scholastic tradition, at the border between the knower and the known. This should entail, at a most general and all-embracing level, either some crossing in Kant from knowledge toward things, or in the tradition a crossing from things themselves anterior to knowing toward an object prior to things themselves and in some sense imposed upon them by the knower.

³¹ "L'errore di Kant, con la Scolastica decadente, è di avere messo a fondamento non l'infinita apertura e concretezza dell'*ens*, ma la essentia astratta equiparata all'*unum* e di aver interpretato i due trascendentali della relazione spirituale, quali il *verum* e il *bonum*, come modalità incluse nell'*unum*, invece di riportarle al supremo che è l'*ens* ed alla sua dinamica di participio presente che indica l'esercizio in atto dell'esse"; Fabro, "Il trascendentale," 552-3.

³² For succinct statements of four interpretations of Section 12, see Hinske, *Kants Weg*, 58, n. 177.

³³ Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B113-14.

³⁴ "Sie . . . doch diese Kriterien des Denkens unbehutsamer Weise zu Eigenschaften der Dinge an sich selbst machten"; B113, *Werke*, 3:124: as translated by J. M. D. Meiklejohn, *Critique of Pure Reason by Immanuel Kant*, rev. ed. (New York: Wiley Book Co., 1943), 66.

³⁵ "Ich nenne alle Erkenntnis *transzendental*, die sich nicht so wohl mit Gegenständen, sondern mit *unserer Erkenntnisart* von Gegenständen, *so fern diese a priori möglich sein soll*, überhaupt beschäftigt"; *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B25; or more simply in the earlier edition: "Ich nenne alle Erkenntnis *transzendental*, die sich nicht so wohl mit Gegenständen, sondern mit unsern Begriffen a priori von Gegenständen überhaupt beschäftigt"; A11-12, in *Werke*, 3:63. Also see Norman Kemp Smith, *A Commentary*, 74.

II

Whether or not Kant in this context ever made a move from knowledge toward things is a question for those more able than I to interpret his doctrine. My concern is with the other, which is to say, the Scholastic side, where I believe some crossing did take place, not exactly at the level of the transcendentals but at an even more general level of “supertranscendentals.”³⁶ Most precisely, I think this crossing occurred at the point of so-called “impossible objects,” such as a goat-stag³⁷ or a chimera.³⁸

In a recent article, I treated discussion of these objects among seventeenth-century Jesuit philosophers in the wake of Suárez.³⁹ To recount briefly my results in that place: some of these philosophers thought that impossible objects were nothing more than a sum of possible parts, say a possible goat plus a possible stag, which together make up not one seamless thing but at best an accidental aggregate.⁴⁰ Others would firmly maintain the opposite view that beyond all

³⁶ For this and much to follow in this article, see John P. Doyle, “Extrinsic Cognoscibility: A Seventeenth Century Supertranscendental Notion,” *The Modern Schoolman* 68 (November 1990): 57–80. Also see Ludger Oeing-Hanhoff, “Res comme concept transcendantal et sur-transcendantal,” in *RES III^o Colloquio Internazionale del Lessico Intellettuale Europeo, Roma, 7–9 gennaio 1980*, ed. M. Fattori and M. Bianchi (Roma, Edizioni dell’Ateneo, 1982): 285–96.

³⁷ For the Scholastics, the *hircocervus*, which itself goes back to the Greek ὁ τριγάλαφος; for this last, see Plato, *Republic* VI, 488 A and Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* 1.38.49a24; *Posterior Analytics* 2.7.92b5–8, and *Perihermeneias* 1.16a16.

³⁸ For a variety of views among sixteenth and seventeenth-century authors on the composition of a chimera, see John P. Doyle, “Suárez on Beings of Reason and Truth (1),” *Vivarium* 25 (May 1987): 47–75, esp. n. 132. While among late Scholastics there was no lockstep agreement, all would think a chimera would involve some fusion of impossible essences.

³⁹ John P. Doyle, “Another God, Chimerae, Goat-Stags, and Man-Lions: A Seventeenth-Century Debate about Impossible Objects,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 48 (June 1995): 771–808.

⁴⁰ See, for example, Richard Lynch, S.J. (1610–1676): “Assero secundo: ens rationis, quamvis de eo affirmari possit non esse ens reale, tamen non est aliquid adaequate distinctum a complexione plurium entium realium, sed potius est aggregatum quoddam per accidens ex extremis realibus, et actu intellectus essentialiter falso: et applicante iis veram, ac realem identitatem, quae tamen inter eos reperiri nequit . . .”; *Universa Philosophia Scholastica* (hereafter: “UPS”), *Metaphysica* 4, tr. 1, c. 1, n. 4 (Lugduni: Sumptibus Borde, Arnaud, et Rigaud, 1654), 3:228; also see John Morawski, S.J. (1633–1700), *Totius philosophiae principia per quaestiones de Ente in communi ex praelectionibus*, disp. 1, q. 2 (Lugduni: Sumptibus A. Thomas, 1688), pp. 14–

possible objects it is necessary to admit, if not in things themselves at least in the mind, objects which are impossible.⁴¹

Suárez himself admitted impossible objects of understanding and placed them at the center of his doctrine respecting beings of reason.⁴² For Suárez, being (the term rather than the concept) was divided into real being and being of reason (*ens rationis*).⁴³ Being of reason, in

37. This position seems to have its antecedents among the Greek commentators; for example, “οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ ἵπποκένταυρος ἐν υποστάσει, ἀλλὰ θεασάμενοι ἵππον καὶ ἄνθρωπον ἀνεπλάσαμεν τῇ ἐπίνοια σύνθετον τὸν ἵπποκένταυρον, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τράγον μὲν ἐποίησεν ἡ φύσις καὶ ἔλαφον, ἀναπλάσαντες δὲ καθ’ ἑαυτοὺς τῇ ἐπίνοια ἀποτελοῦμεν σύνθετον τὸν τραγέλαφον, καὶ ταύτῃ τὸ εἶναι ἔχει”; Ammonius, *In Porphyrii Isagogen sive V Voces*, pp. 1 and 10, ed. Adolfus Busse, in *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, vol. 4, no. 3 (Berolini: Georg Reimer, 1891), p. 40, ll. 2–6; and “ὡσπερ γὰρ ὁνομά τι μόνον τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ἔστιν. ὡσπερ γὰρ ὁ τραγέλαφος ὄνομά μὲν ἔστι, πράγμα δὲ καὶ φύσις τις καὶ ὅλως τι ὄν οὐδαμῶς ἔστιν, οὕτω καὶ τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ὄν ὄνομα μόνον ἔστι”; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *In Aristotelis Metaphysica commentaria*, 6.2, ed. Michael Hayduck, in *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* (Berolini: Georg Reimer, 1891), 1:448, ll. 36–9.

⁴¹ For example: “Admitti necessario debent objecta impossibilia ab omnibus possibilibus distincta”; Thomas Compton Carleton, S.J. (1591–1666), *Logica*, disp. 13, sec. 4, in *Philosophia universa* (hereafter, “PU”) (Antwerpiae: Apud Jacobum Meursium, 1649), 68; Sylvester Mauro, S.J. (1619–1687), *Quaestiones prooemiales logicae*, q. 48, ed. Matteo Liberatore, in *Quaestiones philosophicae* (hereafter: “QP”) (Romae, 1658; reprint Parisii: Bloud et Barral, 1876) 1:478–91; and Maximilian Wietrowski, S.J. (1660–1737), *Logica*, concl. 14, c. 2, n. 1, in *Philosophia disputata, in qua comprehenduntur conclusiones ex universa philosophia Aristotelis* (hereafter: “PD”) (Pragae: Typis Universitatis Caroli Ferdinandi, 1697), 276.

⁴² For this, see *DM*, 54 (25.1014–41) in *Francisco Suárez, On Beings of Reason (De Entibus Rationis), Metaphysical Disputation LIV*, translated with introduction and notes by John P. Doyle (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995).

⁴³ This opposition goes back to Aristotle dividing being in the categories from being as true; see *Metaphysics* 6.2.1026a33–b2. See also Averroes, in *Metaphysicam*, L. VI, c. 1, t. 8, in *Aristotelis omnia quae extant opera cum Averrois commentariis* (Venetiis: Apud Junctas, 1562), 8:152r; St. Thomas Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, c. 1, ed. M.-D. Roland-Gosselin, O.P. (Paris: J. Vrin, 1948), 2–3; Caietanus (Thomas de Vio) (1469–1534), in *‘De Ente et Essentia’ D. Thomae Aquinatis, Commentaria*, c. 4, ed. M.-H. Laurent (Taurini: Marietti, 1934), par. 59, p. 92; Suárez: “. . . de ente dupliciter posse nos loqui: uno modo, ut comprehendit tantum vera entia realia, et illa omnia transcendit et sub se continet. Alio modo, ut extenditur ad multa, quae vere et intrinsece entia non sunt, solumque per quamdam attributionem extrinsecam entia dicuntur, ut sunt privationes, vel omnino per accidens aut rationis”; *DM, Index locupletissimus* IV, c. 2, q. 2 (25.xv); and John of St. Thomas, O.P.: “Loquendo ergo in genere conveniunt communiter auctores, quod sicut dantur solum duo genera entium, scilicet realis et rationis, ita datur solum duplex distinctio, scilicet realis et rationis”; *Logica*, II, q. 2, a. 3, ed. Beatus Reiser, in *Cursum Philosophicum Thomisticum*, (Taurini: Marietti, 1930) 1: 294a.

turn, was divided into negations, privations, and relations. Located then under negations,⁴⁴ impossible or self-contradictory items could have being only in the intellect and by inference were in this the very paradigm of beings of reason.⁴⁵

In time after Suárez, Thomas Compton Carleton, S.J. (1591–1666) espoused the same basic doctrine.⁴⁶ Indeed, as Carleton saw it, the “common” doctrine affirmed congruence between impossible objects and beings of reason.⁴⁷ Every being of reason or impossible object would be a “positive,”⁴⁸ albeit fictitious, “something,” to which the intellect would impart a certain entity, not real or true but metaphorical

⁴⁴ “Addere vero possumus modum alium, quo illa divisio adaequata sit de toto ente rationis, comprehendendo sub negatione entia ficta et impossibilia, . . .”; *DM*, 54.4.10 (26.1031).

⁴⁵ “Et ideo recte definiri solet, ens rationis, esse illud, quod habet esse objective tantum in intellectu, seu esse id, quod a ratione cogitatur ut ens, cum tamen in se entitatem non habeat”; *DM*, 54.1.6 (26.1016). On this, see Doyle, “Suarez on Beings of Reason and Truth (1),” esp. 69–75.

⁴⁶ Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 13–17, in *PU*, pp. 65–80.

⁴⁷ “. . . loquamur cum communi, et dicamus Ens Rationis tunc solum, et semper fieri quando aliquid impossibile mente revolvimus, non quando realia et possibilia”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 16, sec. 5, n. 2, in *PU*, p. 78; “Objective Ens Rationis primario dicitur, quod tantum habet esse objective in intellectu, qualia sunt Hippocervus, homo-leo et similia, quae in se nullum esse habent nec habere possunt, cum in se praedicata semper contradictoria involvant, dum vero cognoscuntur, esse quoddam intentionale iis ab intellectu communicatur”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 13, sec. 1, n. 7, in *PU*, p. 65. For some others before and after Carleton who would equate beings of reason and impossible objects, see, for example: “Infero secundo. Sola enim impossibilia esse entia rationis: quia ens rationis est illud, quod in re non potest existere: At quod in re non potest existere, est impossibile. Ergo ens rationis est id quod est impossibile”; Martin Smiglecki, S.J. (1562–1618), *Logica* I, d. 1, q. 1 (Oxonii: Impensis H. Crypps, J. Godwin, et R. Blagrave, 1618), 3 (For a recent article which brings out the nuances of Smiglecki’s doctrine here, see Gino Roncaglia, “Smigleckius on *entia rationis*,” *Vivarium* 33 [May 1995], 27–49.); “Ens rationis essentialiter seu in statu essentiae suae est ens impossibile, quatenus potest cognosci, et existere in cognitione”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 14, cap. 2, n. 1, in *PD*, p. 276; “Dico iam. Definitio entis rationis recte attribuitur omni et soli impossibili”; Ludwig Babenstuber, O.S.B. (1660–1726), *Metaphysica*, disp. 3, a. 5, n. 3, in *Philosophia Thomistica Salisburgensis sive Cursus philosophicus secundum doctrinam D. Thomae Aquinatis Doctoris Angelici* (Augustae Vindelicorum: Sumptibus G. Schlüteri, 1706), 77.

⁴⁸ “Dico ergo Chimaeram (idem est de omnibus Entibus Rationis) esse quid positivum fictum, quod habet entitatem quandam non veram et realem, sed metaphoricam, illi ab intellectu communicatam, et tunc primum esse incipere cum cogitatur seu fingitur, et cessare seu desinere esse, dum cessat cognitio, quae est causa illius productiva et conservativa”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 14, sec. 1, n. 6, in *PU*, pp. 71–2; also: “. . . id quod apprehendo non est pure nihil, ergo aliquid, ergo ens, non verum, ergo fictum seu factum ab intellectu, . . .”; *ibid.*, disp. 15, sec. 1, n. 6, p. 73.

or “intentional.”⁴⁹ In this way, each would begin to be when it was thought or fashioned by the intellect and would cease to be with the cessation of cognition, which cognition would then be both its producing and its conserving cause.⁵⁰ While this cognition would be causative of such an object, it would not be any constitutive part of it.⁵¹ Hence, there would be a (real) distinction between an extrinsic act of cognition and any being of reason that might subsequently (with posteriority of causal dependence rather than of time⁵²) terminate it as an object.⁵³

Accordingly, impossible objects would have objective being and would thus be knowable,⁵⁴ and would in this be like real beings.⁵⁵ Carleton notes an ambiguity here between “being an object” (*esse objec-*

⁴⁹ “. . . alio quippe modo communicat intellectus existentiam suis actibus, alio modo Entibus Rationis, licet ambo sint ejus effectus, illis nempe physice et realiter, his intentionaliter et metaphoricè”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 15, sec. 3, n. 6, in *PU*, p. 75; “. . . per operationem intentionalem, seu metaphoricam . . .”; *ibid.*, disp. 15, sec. 3, n. 7, p. 76.

⁵⁰ See note 48, and also Suárez: “. . . hujusmodi entia proprie solum dicuntur esse objective in intellectu; unde solum sunt, quando cognoscuntur aut finguntur ab intellectu, . . .”; *DM*, 3.1.10 (25.106); see also *DM*, 6.7.2 (25.229); *DM*, 8.2.20 (25.283); *DM*, 25.1.5 (25.900); and *De Anima* IV, c. 3, n. 26, in *Opera Omnia*, 3:730.

⁵¹ “Dicimus itaque, licet ad Ens Rationis conficiendum necessaria sit cognitio fingens, Ens tamen Rationis non illam involvere ut partem sui constitutam, . . .”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 15, sec. 1, n. 4, in *PU*, p. 73.

⁵² Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 15, sec. 2, n. 14, in *PU*, p. 75; also, *ibid.*, disp. 13, sec. 2, n. 4, p. 66; and the text in note 53.

⁵³ “. . . solum objectum, ut distinctum ab actu, est Ens Rationis”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 15, sec. 1, n. 7, in *PU*, p. 73; “. . . objectum separatim sumpsum, quodque distinguitur a cognitione, est Ens Rationis, . . .”; *ibid.*, disp. 15, sec. 3, n. 3, p. 75; “. . . actus autem est extrinsecus”; *ibid.*, disp. 13, sec. 4, n. 88, p. 68; “Objectum vero solum terminativum, quodque per alienas species cognoscitur, et nullo modo in cognitionem influit, simul natura cum illa est frequenter, subinde posterius, nunquam prius”; *ibid.*, disp. 13, sec. 2, n. 4, p. 66.

⁵⁴ “. . . existere objective in mente potest objectum impossibile, cujus nulla pars sit impossibilis”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 13, sec. 3, n. 3, in *PU*, p. 67. Remark again that for Carleton an impossible object cannot be explained by merely adding not impossible parts; see also note 58.

⁵⁵ “. . . non minus cognoscitur ens illud fictum, quam verum”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 15, sec. 1, n. 2, in *PU*, p. 73; cf. “Objectum ergo intellectus sunt Deus, creaturae, universalia, singularia, res spirituales, materiales, entia, non entia, substantia, accidens, entia realia, et rationis: quando enim dicimus, Chimaera est ens rationis; hippocervus est impossibilis, aut aliquid huiusmodi, objectum aliquod apprehendimus, de quo hoc affirmamus, sed illud objectum non est quid reale et possibile, tunc enim actus esset falsus, ergo concipimus aliquid impossibile; ergo res etiam impossibiles sunt objectum nostri intellectus. De quo fuse dictum est in *Logica*, d. 13. sec. tertia”; Carleton, *De Anima*, disp. 18, sec. 1, n. 2, in *PU*, p. 530.

tum) and “objective being” (*esse objectivum*). Being an object as such results from an act of cognition turning toward something. Objective being, on the other hand, is “that entity” which confronts (*objicitur*) the act.⁵⁶ A being of reason differs from other (that is, real) beings in that while other beings receive being an object (*esse objectum*) from the acts of the intellect, but have their objective being (*esse objectivum*) from elsewhere, that is from their own causes, beings of reason have not only their being an object, but also their very objective being from the intellect.⁵⁷

Importantly, in the case of such objects the parts do not add up to the whole.⁵⁸ Thus in the case of a goat-stag, there is more than a possible goat, a possible stag, and a possible linking or juxtaposition of both.⁵⁹ While all of these items can be either found outside the mind or have an extramental basis, for the proponents of truly impossible objects there is more than this in their fusion. Most significantly, that “more” is as such a contribution of the mind.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ “. . . notandum aliud esse, esse objectum, aliud esse objectivum; esse objectum provenit formaliter ab actu circa aliquid versante, esse vero objectivum est entitas illa quae objicitur . . .”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 15, sec. 1, n. 9, in *PU*, p. 73.

⁵⁷ “In hoc ergo Ens Rationis differt ab aliis entibus quod alia esse quidem objecta ab actibus intellectus recipiant, esse vero objectivum, seu entitatem suam habent aliunde, nempe a suis causis: entia vero Rationis non esse objecta solum, sed ipsum etiam esse objectivum, seu esse actuale et possibile habent ab intellectu, . . .”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 15, sec. 1, n. 10, in *PU*, p. 73.

⁵⁸ “Certum ergo est primo, appositionem solum localem et extrinsecam, seu aggregationem rerum, vel partium physice impossibilium non sufficere ad Ens Rationis . . .”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 14, sec. 3, n. 2, in *PU*, p. 72.

⁵⁹ Consider the following: “Sensus est, objectum aliquod in intellectu existere posse, ita ex puris possibilibus, ut nec pars ulla illius, nec unio sit impossibilis, et tamen totum ipsum, seu complexum sit quid impossibile”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 13, sec. 3, n. 1, in *PU*, pp. 66–7; “. . . illud est impossibile, quod per nullam potentiam a parte rei poni potest prout concipitur, . . .”; *ibid.*, disp. 13, sec. 3, n. 7, p. 67.

⁶⁰ “. . . sicque Ens Rationis in sensu proprio et maxime rigoroso dari existimo, pure scilicet a intellectu confictum, in quo vel nihil involvatur reale, vel saltem aliquid reperitur ab objectis omnibus realibus seu possibilibus plane ac plene distinctum, quod quidquid entitatis habet, ab intellectu mere fingente habet, sicque totum ejus esse, est esse objective in mente”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 13, sec. 4, n. 1, in *PU*, p. 68. In connection with this, consider even Kant’s precritical (1770) concern for a purely intellectual *a priori*: “Meine Absicht ist zu untersuchen, wieviel die Vernunft a priori erkennen kann und wie weit sich ihre Abhängigkeit von der Belehrung der Sinne erstreckt, welches also die Fragen sind, über die sie ohne Beihilfe der Sinne nicht hinausgehen kann. Dieser Gegenstand ist wichtig und gross, denn er

Of this last Aristotle seemingly had an inkling, especially if we follow the reasoning of some of his commentators. For already in the *Categories*, after laying down the general rule that objects precede (theoretical) knowledge, Aristotle cautiously allowed for another possibility in some cases.⁶¹ Porphyry (ca. 231–306) afterwards extended this possibility to imaginary fictions such as chimerae, in which there would be simultaneity between knowing and what is known.⁶² Simplicius (fl. ca. 529) has much the same thought.⁶³ Boethius (ca. 480–524) translated Aristotle's text into Latin⁶⁴ and then commented on it in a way which reflects the Greek tradition. He does not accept impossible objects but thinks that such objects, for example, a chimera or a

zeigt dem Menschen seine Bestimmung mit der Vernunft. Um zu diesem Endzwecke zu gelangen, finde ich für nötig, die Vernunft zu isolieren, aber auch die Sinnlichkeit, und erstlich alles was a priori erkannt werden kann, zu betrachten, ob es auch zu dem Gebiete der Vernunft gehört. Diese abge sonderte Betrachtung, diese reine Philosophie ist von grossem Nutzen"; B. Erdmann, *Reflexionen* Nr. 98, p. 32, as cited by Leisegang, "Über die Bedeutung," 414. To this Leisegang himself immediately added: "Diese Problemstellung enthält die Grundfrage des Kritizismus: Wie ist reine Vernunftkenntnis, oder spezieller: Wie sind synthetische Urteile a priori überhaupt möglich?"; *ibid.*

⁶¹ "ὥς γὰρ ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ προουπαρχόντων τῶ πραγμάτων τὰς ἐπιστήμας λαμβάνομεν· ἐπ' ὀλίγων γὰρ ἂν ἢ ἐπ' οὐδενὸς ἴδιοι τις ἂν ἅμα τῶ ἐπιστητῶ τὴν ἐπιστήμην γιομένην"; *Categories* 7.7b24–6, in *Aristotle: The Categories, On Interpretation*, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1962), 56. On the "ἅμα" ("simultaneously") here, see the text referenced in notes 52 and 53.

⁶² "Φημί ὅτι ἐπὶ τῶν ἀναπλασμάτων ἅμα γὰρ τῶ ἀναπλάσαι χίμαιραν υπέστη ἅμα καὶ ἡ ἐπιστήμη τῆς χιμαίρας καὶ τὸ φάντασμα αὐτῆς, . . ."; *Porphyrii Isagoge et in Aristotelis Categorias commentarium*, ed. Adolfus Busse, in *Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca* (Berolini: Georg Reimer, 1887), 4:121, ll. 8–9.

⁶³ ". . . ἀληθές δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀναπλασμάτων τῶν τε ἐν φαντασίᾳ καὶ τῶν τεχνητῶν· ἅμα γὰρ χίμαιρα καὶ ἐπιστήμη τῆς χιμαίρας"; *Simplicii in Aristotelis commentarium*, ed. Carolus Kalbfleisch, in *Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca* (Berolini: Georg Reimer, 1907), 8:191, ll. 14–15.

⁶⁴ ". . . in pluribus praeexistentibus rebus scientias accipimus in paucis enim vel nullo quisquam hoc perspiciet simul cum scibili scientiam esse factam."; Boethius, trans. *Praedicamenta*, c. 3, in *Aristotelis omnia quae extant opera cum Averrois commentariis*, vol. 1 (Venetiis: Apud Junctas, 1562) fol. 37v M; or: ". . . ut plurimum prius rebus subsistentibus scientias acceperimus. In paucis vero vel nullis hoc quis reperiet, simul cum scibili scientiam esse factam"; Boethius, trans., in *Patrologia Latina* (hereafter, "PL"), vol. 64, ed. J.-P. Migne (Parisiis: Apud Editorem, 1847), col. 229. On the true text of Boethius's translation, Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, "The Genuine Text of Boethius's Translation of Aristotle's *Categories*," *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies* 1 (1941–3), 151–77.

centaur, might be in play when a subversion of the priority of objects to science is entertained.⁶⁵

Aristotle's position and the commentary on it were well known in late Scholasticism.⁶⁶ Specifically, it was known among the Jesuits from the time of their first great philosopher-theologian, Francisco de Toledo (a.k.a. Toletus [1533–1596]), who has linked it explicitly with “impossible things.”⁶⁷ Up to now, I have not found this exploited by any seventeenth-century proponent of impossible objects.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, the implications of the two opposing seventeenth-century

⁶⁵ “Quasdam namque res animus sibi ipse confingit, ut chimeram, vel centaurum, vel alia hujusmodi, quae tunc sciuntur, cum ea sibi animus finxerit. Tunc autem esse incipiunt, quando primum in opinione versantur. . . . Namque antequam chimera fingeretur, sicut ipsa in nulla opinione fuerat, ita quoque ejus scientia non erat. Postquam vero ipsa animarum imaginatione constituta est, ejus quoque cum ipsa imaginatione scientia consecuta est: atque ideo ait in paucis hoc posse perspicere, ut simul cum scientia scibile sit, ut in hac eadem chimera, quae cum sit scibilis, cum scientia nata est. Sed quoniam nihil quod in substantia non permanet, neque in veritate consistit, sciri potest (scientia enim est rerum quae sunt comprehensio veritatis), et quidquid sibi animus fingit, vel imaginatione reperit, cum in substantia atque veritate constitutum non sit, illud posse sciri non dicitur, atque ideo non est eorum scientia ulla quae sola imaginatione subsistunt. Idcirco itaque dubitans dixit, in paucis enim vel nullis. Haec enim ipsa pauca ita quisque reperiet, ut si ad veram rationem examinationemque contenderit, nulla esse perpendat. Quod si quisquam chimerae aliqua [sic] esse scientiam dicit, quae non est, quanquam hoc falsum est, tamen hoc quoque concessio pauca erunt in quibus scientia cum scibili simul natura sit”; Boethius, *In Categorias*, PL, vol. 64, col. 229.

⁶⁶ For example: “Quod a diversis diversimode exponitur: a Boetio quidem sic: in paucis, id est, in chimericis vel nullis, quia ipsa chimerica nulla scibilia sunt”; Thomas de Vio Cardinalis Cajetanus, *Scripta philosophica: Commentaria in Praedicamenta Aristotelis*, ed. M.-H. Laurent, O.P. (Rome: Apud Institutum ‘Angelicum,’ 1939), 126.

⁶⁷ “Boet. inquit hic loqui Aristotel. de scientia, qua res impossibiles et imaginarias cognoscimus. Haec enim cognitio simul est cum re cognita, nec fuit res scibilis ante scientiam”; D. Francisci Toleti e Societatis Jesu theologo S. R. E. cardinalis, *Quaestiones in Categorias Aristotelis*, cap. 8, q. 2, in *Commentaria, una cum quaestionibus in universam Aristotelis Logicam* (Coloniae Agrippinae: In Officina Birckmannica, 1616; reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1985), 141.

⁶⁸ Silvester Mauro, for example, is quite aware of Aristotle's position but has not mentioned or developed the later commentary on it; for example, “. . . pleraque scibilia sunt, antequam a nobis sciuntur, pauca vero vel nulla scibilia sunt, quae, eo ipso quod sunt, sciuntur a nobis . . .”; *Aristotelis Praedicamenta*, tr. 2, cap. 3 or 8, n. 7, in *Aristotelis Opera omnia quae extant, brevi paraphrasi et litterae perpetuo inhaerente expositione illustrata a Silvestro Mauro, S.J.*, vol. 1, ed. F. Ehrle, B. Felchlin, F. Beringer, and A. Bringmann (Parisii: P. Lethielleux, 1885), 44a.

positions should still be plain. For those who say a goat-stag or a chimaera is nothing more than the sum of possible parts, it is clear that these ultimately fall under real being as this last comprises that which, independent of the mind, is or can be.⁶⁹ For those on the other side who admit impossible objects, these precisely as such will have to be mind-dependent.⁷⁰

III

The question then is whether there is any ultimate conceptual community between that which is or can be and truly impossible objects which cannot be. At least for some who would reduce such objects to the aggregate of their possible parts, this question is consistently answered in the affirmative. Beings of reason, including impossible objects, and real beings would both fall under a common concept of being inasmuch as being would be intrinsic to both.⁷¹ However, for those who like Carleton would, beyond all possible objects, affirm others which are impossible, there is indeed a question about what, if anything, the two kinds of objects have in common. Most of those affirming such objects would probably follow Suárez and say that between beings of reason, including impossible objects, and real

⁶⁹ Richard Lynch, as cited in note 40. For the scope of “real” being here, see Suárez, *DM*, 2.4.3 (25.88). For further discussion of the Suarezian doctrine here, in terms of the distinctions between (1) the formal and the objective concept, and (2) being as a participle and being as a noun, see John P. Doyle, “Suárez on the Analogy of Being [Part I],” *The Modern Schoolman* 46 (1969): 219–49, esp. 224–31.

⁷⁰ See Carleton, as cited in note 60. In the Greek tradition, see, for example: “τῶν ὄντων . . . τὰ δὲ ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὐκ ἔστιν, ἅπερ καὶ ἀδύνατον εἶναι λέγει, οἷον τὰ μηδαμῆ μηδαμῶς ἐν ὑπάρξει ὄντα πλὴν ἢ κατὰ ψιλὴν ἐπίνοιαν, οἷον τραγέλαφος, . . .”; Joannes Philoponus, *In Aristotelis Libros de Generatione et Corruptione commentaria*, II, c. 9, ed. Hieronymus Vitelli, in *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*, vol. 14, bk. 2 (Beroni: Georg Reimer, 1897), p. 284, ll. 15–19.

⁷¹ See for example: “Etenim ab ente reali et rationis aliqua ratio communis utrique intrinseca, et essentialis abstrahi potest: sed talis ratio est entis: una igitur ratio entis abstrahi ab utroque sustinet”; Richard Lynch, *Metaphysica* 5, tr. 2, c. 7, n. 46, in *UPS*, 3:281; “. . . ens reale et rationis, non obstante quantavis earum distantia et diversitate, conjungi poterunt, et convenire in uno conceptu objectivo intrinseco, quem per intellectum abstrahi a se sinant, quantumlibet eum reipsa contrahant”; *ibid.*, tr. 2, cap. 7, n. 57, p. 284; and *idem*, *Dialectica*, L. 9, tr. 1, c. 7, nn. 61–4, 1:295–6.

being there is not conceptual but only verbal community.⁷² While this begins with the term “being,” by immediate inference it would include the terms “one,” “true,” and “good,” the so-called transcendentals.⁷³ However, as we shall see, some of those who admit impossible objects will also admit some kind of conceptual community between real beings and such objects, and by inference some such community not just in being, but also in unity, truth, and goodness.

IV

The quest for this kind of community goes back a long way in the history of philosophy. It was first adumbrated by the Greek Stoics, who, restricting “being” (τὸ ὄν) to corporeal things, thought “something” (τὶ) was a wider notion which also embraced incorporeal things.⁷⁴ The Roman Stoic Seneca (4 B.C.?–65 A.D.) chose the Latin phrase *quod est*, as equivalent to τὸ ὄν and thought it wide enough to encompass everything, corporeal and incorporeal.⁷⁵ At the same time,

⁷² For example: “. . . in entibus rationis nec vera ratio entis nec perseitatibus invenitur, sed solum metaphorica, ergo ab iis et entibus realibus abstrahi ratio non potest, . . .”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 40, sec. 4, n. 4, in *PU*, p. 153. For Suárez see: “. . . ens rationis . . . non habet communem conceptum, nec realem convenientiam cum ente reali, et ideo divisio entis in ens reale et rationis non recte inter divisiones entis numeratur, quia illa magis est divisio nominis quam rei . . .”; *DM*, 4.7.4 (25.138); cf. *DM*, 54.1.9 (26.1017) and *De Anima* IV, c. 1, n. 4 (3.714).

⁷³On the parallel between real and rational transcendentals: “. . . dici potest, passiones entis rationis non distingui ab essentia in qua fundantur, nisi per maiorem expressionem unius et eiusdem entitatis fictae, atque eo modo, quo passiones entis non distinguuntur ab essentia ipsius, nisi per expressionem diversam, aut maiorem, unius ejusdemque conceptus objectivi. Unde quemadmodum ens et ipsius proprietates transcendentales unicam existentiam habent, ita et proprietates fictae atque essentia ficta, existunt per unicam existentiam fictam et objectivam”; José Saenz de Aguirre, O.S.B. (1630–1699), *Logica*, tr. 2, disp. 9, sec. 5, n. 68, in *Philosophia rationalis nov-antiqua sive Disputationes selectae in Logicam et Metaphysicam Aristotelis* (Salmanticae: Apud Lucam Perez, 1675), 129. For some of the complexity in seventeenth-century doctrine respecting the transcendentals, see Piero Di Vona, *I concetti trascendenti in Sebastián Izquierdo e nella scolastica del seicento* (Napoli: Loffredo Editore, 1994).

⁷⁴ See the texts from Alexander of Aphrodisias, Sextus Empiricus, Philo, and Plotinus cited by Joannes ab Arnim in *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, vol. 2 (Lipsiae: Teubner, 1903), nn. 329, 331, and 334, p. 117, and n. 371, p. 125.

⁷⁵ “‘Quod est’ in has species divido, ut sint corporalia aut incorporalia: nihil tertium est”; Seneca, *Epistola* 58, n. 14, in *Sénèque, Lettres à Lucilius*, vol. 2, ed. François Préchac, trans. Henri Noblot (Paris: Société d’Édition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1969), 74.

Seneca noted that some earlier Stoics had put another genus above this.⁷⁶ So he tells us, "By certain Stoics 'something' was regarded as the first genus. The apparent reason for this is as follows. They say that in nature there are things which are and things which are not. Nature, however, embraces those which are not, which occur merely in the mind, for example: centaurs, giants, and whatever else formed by a false cogitation begins to have some image, although no substance."⁷⁷ This "something" seemed to Seneca to be the equivalent of the "thinkable."⁷⁸

In the Middle Ages, further anticipation may be found in the "res ('thing') from *reor*, *reris* ('I think, you think')" doctrine of St. Thomas,⁷⁹ St. Bonaventure (ca. 1217–1274),⁸⁰ and Henry of Ghent (1217–

⁷⁶ "Stoici volunt superponere huic etiamnunc aliud genus magis principale"; Seneca, *Epistola* 58, n. 13, in *Sénèque, Lettres à Lucilius*, p. 74.

⁷⁷ "Primum genus Stoicis quibusdam videtur 'quid': quare videatur, subiciam. In rerum, inquit, natura quaedam sunt, quaedam non sunt, et haec autem, quae non sunt, rerum natura complectitur, quae animo succurrunt, tamquam Centauri, Gigantes et quicquid aliud falsa cogitatione formatum habere aliquam imaginem coepit, quamvis non habeat substantiam"; Seneca, *Epistola* 58, n. 15, in *Sénèque, Lettres à Lucilius*, p. 75.

⁷⁸ "Primum illud 'quod est' nec visu nec tactu nec ullo sensu comprehenditur: cogitabile est"; Seneca, *Epistola* 58, n. 16, in *Sénèque, Lettres à Lucilius*, p. 75.

⁷⁹ ". . . nomen 'rei' dupliciter sumitur. Simpliciter enim dicitur res quod habet esse ratum et firmum in natura; et dicitur res hoc modo, accepto nomine 'rei' secundum quod habet quidditatem vel essentiam quamdam: ens vero, secundum quod habet esse, ut dicit Avicenna, *Metaph.* tract. I, cap. VI, distinguens entis et rei significationem. Sed quia res per essentiam suam cognoscibilis est, transumptum est nomen 'rei' ad omne id quod in cognitione vel intellectu cadere potest, secundum quod res a 'reor reris' dicitur; et per hunc modum dicuntur res rationis quae in natura ratum esse non habent, secundum quem modum etiam negationes et privationes res dici possunt, sicut et entia rationis dicuntur, ut Commentator, in IV *Metaph.* comm. 2, dicit"; S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* II, d. 37, q. 1, a. 1, ed. R. P. Mandonnet (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929), 944; also: *ibid.* I, q. 25, q. 1, a. 4, pp. 611–12.

⁸⁰ "Res secundum quod communiter dicitur, dicitur a *reor*, *reris*; et sic comprehendit omne illud quod cadit in cognitione, sive sit res exterius sive in sola opinione. Proprie vero dicitur *res a ratus, rata, ratum*, secundum quod ratum dicitur esse illud quod non tantummodo est in cognitione, immo est in rerum natura, sive sit ens in se sive in alio; et hoc modo res convertitur cum ente"; S. Bonaventurae, *Sententiarum*, L. 2, d. 37, dub. 1, in *Opera theologica selecta*, vol. 2 (Quaracchi: Ex typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1938), 910; also: *ibid.*, vol. 1, d. 25, dub. 3, p. 355.

1293),⁸¹ for all of whom “thing” was a term wide enough to embrace whatever might in any way be thought or expressed.⁸² At the same time, the notion of *res* from *reor*, *reris* was contrasted with being and, to some extent paradoxically, even with the thinkable or the intelligible.⁸³ The key was that while *res* from *reor*, *reris* was wide enough to embrace impossible objects, such objects were beyond the pale of intelligibility.⁸⁴ In line with this, St. Thomas says that a chimera is a

⁸¹ Henry of Ghent, *Summae quaestionum ordinariarum*, a. 24, q. 3 (Paris: In aed. I.B. Ascensii, 1520), fol. 138v, O-P; *ibid.*, a. 34, q. 2, fol. 212r; *Quodlibetum* 7, qq. 1 and 2, ed. Gordon A. Wilson, in *Henrici de Gandavo Opera Omnia* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1991), 11:27. On Henry’s overall doctrine here, see Jan A. Aertsen, “Transcendental Thought in Henry of Ghent,” in *Henry of Ghent*, ed. W. Vanhamel (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), 1–18; also see Jean Paulus, *Henri de Gand. Essai sur les tendances de sa métaphysique* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1938), 22–8.

⁸² While there are huge differences among thirteenth-century Scholastics here, Henry’s doctrine shows the thrust which later thinkers will follow: “. . . sciendum quod omnium communissimum, omnia continens in quodam ambitu analogo, est *res* sive *aliquid*, sic consideratum ut nihil sit ei oppositum nisi purum nihil, quod nec est nec natum est esse, neque in re extra intellectum, neque etiam in conceptu alicuius intellectus, quia nihil est natum movere intellectum nisi habens rationem alicuius realitatis. *Res* autem, sive ‘*aliquid*’ sic communissime acceptum, non habet rationem praedicamenti”; *Quodlibetum* 7, qq. 1 and 2; pp. 26–7. See Paulus’s comment on this: “Cette notion souhaitée embrasse, non point simplement ni exactement tout *objet* concevable, mais *tout contenu de pensée*, à quoi répond ou ne répond point un *objet*. Il est l’indice le plus général qui affecte, en commun, nos représentations, la forme transcendente, au sens kantien, de tout produit de l’intellect”; *Henri de Gand*, 22. However, see also Aertsen’s challenge to Paulus’s opinion here, “Transcendental Thought,” 5–6, central to which is the reduction of impossible items to their possible parts; cf. Henry speaking of a “golden mountain,” which along with a “goat-stag” is a “thing” in the widest sense of the term: “Est tamen *res* secundum veritatem quoad partes eius quae sunt mons et aurum et huiusmodi; aliter enim non posset totum esse in intellectu et ens secundum opinionem, nisi partes essent *aliquid* secundum veritatem, quia ab alio non potest moveri intellectus”; *Quodlibet* 7, qq. 1 and 2, p. 27, as cited by Aertsen, p. 5, n. 13.

⁸³ See, for example, Henry: “. . . ratio rei a reor dicta non potest concipi ab intellectu . . .”; *Summae*, a. 34, q. 2, fol. 212r; and Scotus: “. . . decepti sunt qui concipiunt per ens fictum distinctum contra ens ratum, aliquid unum, nam fictitium non est conceptibile, nisi ab intellectu errante, ut chimaera, sicut nec contradictoria; et ideo non habet ideam, nisi quia partes eius concipi possunt, sed ipsum non”; *Reportata parisiensia*, d. 43, q. 1, n. 14, in R. P. F. Ioannis Duns Scoti, *Opera omnia*, ed. L. Wadding (Lugduni: Sumptibus Laurentii Durand, 1639) 11:229.

⁸⁴ For St. Thomas, see *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 25, a. 3, pp. 199–200; *Quaestiones disputatae de potentia Dei*, q. 1, a. 3, ad 1, ed. Paul M. Pession (Taurini: Marietti, 1953), 15; *Quaestiones quodlibetales* V, q. 2, a. 1, ad 1, ed. Raymond Spiazzi (Tuarini: Marietti, 1956), 99; *Scriptum in libros Sententiarum* I, d. 42, q. 2, a. 2, ad 6, p. 993; and *Summa contra gentiles* I, c. 84

false conception.⁸⁵ Duns Scotus tells us further that “being most commonly taken” (*ens omnino communissime*), the object of the intellect, includes both real beings and beings of reason in the sense of those which can exist only in the mind.⁸⁶ However, it does not include impossible objects.⁸⁷

Impossible objects are included, however, in what Walter Burley (1275–1344?) has called “maximally transcendent being,” which is common to every intelligible item and identical with the adequate object of the intellect.⁸⁸ Distinct from being as possible or actual,⁸⁹ maximally transcendent being is said to be “in the intellect,” which is to

(Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1952), 1:291. For Scotus, see: *Ordinatio* I, disp. 2, pars 1, q. 2, in *Joannis Duns Scoti Opera omnia* (Civitas Vaticana: Typis Vaticanis, 1950) 1:208, n. 137; *ibid.*, I, disp. 43, qu. un., 6(1963):360, n. 18; and *Quodlibeta* III, a. 1, n. 9, in *Obras del Doctor Sutil Juan Duns Escoto: Cuestiones cuodlibetales*, ed. Felix Alluntis (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1968), 94.

⁸⁵ Aquinas, *Scriptum in libros Sententiarum* I, d. 2, q. 1, p. 67.

⁸⁶ Scotus, *Quodlibeta* III, a.1, in *Obras del Doctor Sutil*, 93–4.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 94; also see *Ordinatio* I, d. 2, pars 1, q. 2, in *Joannis Duns Scoti Opera omnia*, 1:208, n. 137; and *ibid.*, I, d. 43, qu. un., 6:360, n. 18. For more nuances of Duns Scotus’s doctrine here, see Ludger Honnefelder, “Die Lehre von der doppelten Ratur des Entis und ihre Bedeutung für die Metaphysik des Johannes Duns Scotus,” in *Deus et Homo ad mentem I. Duns Scoti: Acta Tertii Congressus Scientistici Internationalis Vindebonae, 18 sept.–2 oct. 1970* (Romae: Societas Internationalis Scientistica, 1972), 661–71.

⁸⁸ “. . . ens potest accipi tripliciter. Uno modo ut est maxime transcendens et commune omni intelligibili. Et sic est adaequatum obiectum intellectus”; Walter Burley, *De puritate artis logicae tractatus longior*, tr. 1, pars 3, ed. Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M. (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1955), 59. For the same doctrine, see Herman Shapiro, “Walter Burley’s *De Ente*,” *Manuscripta* 7 (1963): 103–8, esp. 108.

⁸⁹ “Secundo modo accipitur pro ente, cui non est esse prohibitum, et sic omne possibile esse est ens. . . . Tertio modo accipitur pro ente actualiter existente. . . .”; *De puritate*, tr. 1, pars 3, 59. Also see Shapiro, “Walter Burley’s *De Ente*,” 108. The use of *prohibitum*, both in the *De puritate* and four times in the *De ente*, is instructive. At about the time Burley was writing, this term was applied by, among others, Peter Aureol (1280?–1322) and Francis of Mayronnes (d. ca. 1325) to impossible beings. Thus, in using it here, Burley is saying that such impossible beings which are excluded from the second and third ways of being, are included in the first way inasmuch as they can be objectively in the intellect. For Peter, see Dominik Perler, “Peter Aureol vs. Hervaeus Natalis on Intentionality,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 61 (1994): 227–62, esp. 255–7; for Francis, see *Quodlibetti Questio VII*, n. 7, in *Praeclarissima ac multum subtilia egregiaque scripta illuminati doc. F. Francisci de Mayronnis ordinis Minorum in quatuor libros Sententiarum. Ac quolibeta eiusdem* (Venetij: Imp. Heredum Dni. Octaviani Scoti, 1520), fol. 239v.

say *objectively* in the intellect.⁹⁰ Burley identifies this maximally transcendent being as “the intelligible,” and traces his doctrine in its regard to Avicenna’s *Metaphysics*, Tractate 1, c. 5.⁹¹ This is particularly interesting in view of the fact that earlier with Henry of Ghent⁹² and then with Duns Scotus⁹³ and still later with Suárez,⁹⁴ the Avicennian notion of a common concept of being⁹⁵ is chosen over rival notions, especially over that of Averroes,⁹⁶ as the subject of metaphysics.⁹⁷

Burley did not use the words “supertranscendent” or “supertranscendental,” preferring instead the mentioned phrase “maximally transcendent.” However, two centuries later, Domingo Soto, O.P., (1495–1560) tells us that a term such as “imaginable” is called “supertranscendental.”⁹⁸ Further, Pedro da Fonseca, S.J., (1528–1599) had a notion of “something” (aliquid) which was broad enough to include

⁹⁰ “Ens primo modo dictum dicitur ens in intellectu, quia est objectum intellectus; et ita est ens in intellectu objective”; Burley, *De puritate*, tr. 1, pars 3; p. 59.

⁹¹ “Intelligendum secundum Avicennam, primo *Metaphisice* sue, capitulo quinto, quod ens uno modo est obiectum adequatum intellectus. . . . Et isto modo ens quod est maxime transcendens est obiectum adequatum intellectus secundum Avicennam, nam omne ens est cognoscibile ab intellectu, et omne cognoscibile ab intellectu est ens; et isto modo isti termini ‘ens’ et ‘intelligibile’ sunt termini convertibiles. . . .”; Shapiro, “Walter Burley’s *De ente*,” 107–8.

⁹² Henry of Ghent, *Summae*, a. 21, q. 3, fol. 126r; *ibid.*, a. 7, q. 3, ad 4, fol. 51r.

⁹³ Scotus, *Ordinatio*, Prol. pars 3, q. 2, ad 2, 1:130, n. 194.

⁹⁴ *DM*, 1.1.1–25 (25.2–11). Suárez in this section (nn. 2–25; pp. 2–11) has given six versions of metaphysics extant in the Middle Ages, all of which are different from his own view.

⁹⁵ Avicenna, *Metaphysica*, tr. 1, c. 2 (ed. Venice: Per Bonetum Lucatellum, 1508), fol. 70v, as found in *Avicenna Latinus. Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina*, I–IV, ed. S. Van Riet (Louvain: E. Peeters and Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), 13; *ibid.*, tr. 1, c. 7, fol. 73r, p. 41.

⁹⁶ See Averroes, *In Physicorum libros I*, t. 83, in *Aristotelis De Physico Auditu, libri octo. Cum Averrois Cordubensis variis in eosdem commentariis* (Venetiis: Apud Junctas, 1562), fol. 47r2–v1. For the principal texts upon which Averroes’s view is based, see Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 6.1.1026a15–20 and 11.7.1064a26–b6.

⁹⁷ On the question of the subject of metaphysics among the medievals, see Albert Zimmermann, *Ontologie oder Metaphysik? Die Diskussion über den Gegenstand der Metaphysik im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965).

⁹⁸ Dominigo Soto, *Summulae summularum*, c. 6, n. 4, 2d ed. (Salamanticae: Excudebat Andreas a Portonariis, 1554; reprint, Hildesheim, N.Y.: Georg Olms, 1980), fol. 10r.

anything of which one can think or talk,⁹⁹ and specifically mentioned “opinionable,”¹⁰⁰ “thinkable,” and “apprehensible” as supertranscendental terms.¹⁰¹

In the seventeenth century, the Calvinist Clemens Timpler (1568–1624) took the proper subject of metaphysics to be “all that is intelligible” (πᾶν νοητόν or *omne intelligibile*),¹⁰² which embraced both being (including beings of reason) and nonbeing, or “nothing.”¹⁰³ Unlike Suárez, Timpler affirmed a conceptual community between real being and being of reason, to the point that they share an “analogous genus” of being.¹⁰⁴ Again in opposition to Suárez, he excluded privations and

⁹⁹ Pedro da Fonseca, *Commentariorum in Metaphysicorum Aristotelis libros V*, c. 1, q. 2 (Coloniae: L. Zetzner, 1615; reprint Hildesheim, N.Y.: Georg Olms, 1964), 2:12c. For an earlier appreciation of the same concept, see Gregory of Rimini, *Super primum et secundum Sententiarum* I, d. 1, q. 1, a. 1 (Venice, 1522; reprint St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1955), fol. 1Q - fol. 2A, as cited by M. M. Adams, *William Ockham* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 1:311.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. the “τὸ δοξαστόν” which Aristotle has distinguished from “τὸ ἐπιστητόν,” *Posterior Analytics*, 2.33.88b30. For Henry referring to *res* from *reor*, *reris* as designating a “*realitas opinionabilis*,” see *Summae*, a. 21, q. 4, in vol. 1, fol. 127rO. Aertsen (“Transcendental Thought,” 5) says that Scotus (*Ordinatio* I, d. 3, pars 2, q. un., in *Opera omnia* 3[1954]:188–9, n. 310) uses this expression “to typify Henry’s position.”

¹⁰¹ Fonseca, *Institutionum dialecticarum libri octo* I, c. 28 (Coimbra: Apud Joannem Barrerium, 1575), 82. This work was republished by Joaquim Ferreira Gomes in 2 vols., with introduction, critical Latin text, notes and Portuguese translation, as *Pedro da Fonseca: Instituições dialécticas* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1964). See, in this connection, Angelelli speaking of Kant: “The unity of apperception alone corresponds to the category of *cogitabile* among the late scholastics. ‘Cogitabile’ is a predicate applying not only to all real beings (*entia realia*) but also to *entia rationis*. Fonseca says that this kind of predicate was called by the late scholastics (*a recentioribus*) ‘supertranscendentalis’ (*Institutionum Dialecticarum Libri Octo*, Lugduni, 1611, Liber I, caput 28). Gassendi uses ‘supertranscendens’ (*In Meditationem* V, Dub. 2, Inst.). Should Kant have said ‘supertranscendental unity of apperception?’; Ignacio Angelelli, “On the Origins,” 121, n. 12. Also see Jean-François Courtine, *Suarez et le système de la métaphysique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), 267, n. 12.

¹⁰² “Proinde nos latius extendimus rem in Metaphysica consideratam, ut sub ea πᾶν νοητόν, hoc est, omne intelligibile comprehendatur, . . . Proinde concludo, Subjectum proprium et adaequatum Metaphysicae esse Omne intelligibile”; Clemens Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema Methodicum* (Seorsum Accesserunt Rodolphi Goclenii Philosophi Cl. Notae et Scholia.), L. I, c. 1, probl. 5 (Hanoviae: Apud P. Antonium, 1616), 6.

¹⁰³ Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. 1, c. 2, probl. 1, p. 21.

¹⁰⁴ “Ens universaliter acceptum non esse genus univocum entis realis et rationis; sed genus analogum, seu genus πρὸς ἕν. . . . nego ens rationis nullam praeter nominis communionem habere cum ente reali . . .”; Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. 1, c. 3, probl. 6, pp. 31–2.

negations from both being of reason and, more broadly, from this “analogous genus” of being.¹⁰⁵ Privations and negations are nonbeing.¹⁰⁶ Yet, at the same time, they do fall under the object of metaphysics inasmuch as they are intelligible.¹⁰⁷ All of which suggests that intelligibility is somehow beyond (*supra*) being—that it is, without its actually being said, some kind of “supertranscendental.”¹⁰⁸ As such, it embraces both being (including beings of reason) and nonbeing, or “nothing.”¹⁰⁹ Indeed, this seems necessary for consideration of the basic principles of metaphysics: contradiction, identity, and excluded middle.¹¹⁰ For in order to understand such principles, and then to develop the disciplines of metaphysics and logic, we must regard even “nothing” as somehow intelligible.¹¹¹ That is to say, nothing must be in some way “something” about which we can think and speak.¹¹²

¹⁰⁵ “. . . nego, imo pernego, privationes et negationes esse entia rationis”; Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. 1, c. 3, probl. 6, p. 32.

¹⁰⁶ “. . . cum privatio et negatio stricte sumpta non suscipiant rationem entis, sed Non entis”; Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. 1, c. 3, probl. 6, pp. 35–6.

¹⁰⁷ “Sunt enim duo summa genera eorum, quae dicuntur intelligibilia, quorum unum complectitur ea, quae per se, hoc est per propriam notionem sunt intelligibilia: alterum ea, quae per accidens, hoc est, per notionem alterius sunt intelligibilia. Atque ad hoc postremum genus etiam Nihil, omnesque privationes et negationes referuntur”; Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. 1, c. 2, probl. 1, p. 22.

¹⁰⁸ “Supra ens enim adhuc alia genera sunt collocata, nimirum Intelligibile, aliquid, aliquid positivum: ideoque illud non est summum genus, sed species aliis generibus subjecta. Et, per consequens [ens] perfecte definiri potest. Unde etiam a nobis in praeceptis definitum fuit, quod sit aliquid positivum essentia praeditum”; Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. 1, c. 3, probl. 1, p. 28. While our immediate concern is with intelligibility, we should note Timpler’s highly unusual view of the definable character of being and its connection with such supertranscendent notions as *intelligibility*, *something*, and *something positive*.

¹⁰⁹ See note 111.

¹¹⁰ “Nihil pro praecepto Metaphysico haberi debet, quod sub rationem formalem huius subjecti non cadit”; Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. I, c. 1, probl. 5, p. 8; also see his remarks in connection with the intelligibility of “nihil” in note 111.

¹¹¹ “Nihil . . . est intelligibile. Quod nisi fieret, multa principia Philosophica . . . a nobis intelligi non possent; cuiusmodi sunt: Quicquid est, aut est a nihilo, aut ab aliquo. Ex nihilo nihil fit. Aliquid in nihilum non potest resolvi; inter nihil et aliquid nulla est proportio. Cum autem hoc sit absurdum et pugnet cum sano cuiusque hominis iudicio, statuendum omnino est, Nihil est intelligibile”; Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. 1, c. 2, probl. 1, p. 21.

¹¹² In this connection, Timpler has cited Fonseca (“5 *Metaph.* cap. 1”) saying that *aliquid* embraces *ens* and *non-ens*; see Timpler, *Metaphysicae Systema*, L. 1, c. 2, probl. 3, p. 24.

As far as I know, no one exactly followed Timpler in this.¹¹³ A fellow Calvinist, John Baptist Clauberg (1622–1665) came close, when in his *Ontosophia* he said that the widest meaning of being was “the intelligible” and with an obviously Cartesian slant thought this to be the starting point of philosophy.¹¹⁴ Later G. W. Leibniz (1646–1716) in his *Introductio ad Encyclopaediam arcanam*, spoke of a “general science,” whose concern was with the “thinkable insofar as it is thinkable.”¹¹⁵ Within this general science, “perhaps,” he says, is ontology: “the science of something and of nothing, of being and of nonbeing, of thing and mode, of substance and accident.”¹¹⁶

Parallel to more frequent mention of supertranscendence, throughout the seventeenth century many items were being transferred from metaphysics to logic,¹¹⁷ and both metaphysics and logic were increasingly viewed as embracing real being and beings of reason. While not developing his own doctrine of supertranscendence, the Dominican John of St. Thomas (a.k.a. John Poinot [1589–1644]), has in his logic used the word “supertranscendental” at least three

¹¹³ Even Rudolph Goclenius (1547–1628), who wrote a preface to Timpler’s *Metaphysica*, separated himself from the basic doctrine contained in it. See *In M. Clementis Timpleri Metaphysicam*, ad cap. II (Hanoviae: Apud P. Antonium, 1616), p. 8. Also see Goclenius, *Isagoge in peripateticorum et scholasticorum primam philosophiam* (Francofurti: Officina Zachariae Palthenii, 1598): “Subiectum igitur primae philosophiae constat re considerata, et modo considerandi. Illa est Ens: Hic est, qua Ens”; c. 1, p. 2; “Ens quod Metaphysicae per se et proprie subicitur est Reale”; *ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹⁴ John Baptist Clauberg, *Metaphysica de Ente, sive rectius Ontosophia* I, nn. 4–5, in *Opera omnia*, (Amstelodami: Blaeu, 1691; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1968) 1:283.

¹¹⁵ G. W. Leibniz, *Opuscules et fragments inédites*, ed. Louis Couturat (Paris, F. Alcan, 1903; reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1966), 511.

¹¹⁶ Leibniz, *Opuscules*, 512. In this connection, see Wolfgang Hübener, “Scientia de Aliquo de Nihilo: Die historischen Voraussetzungen von Leibniz’ Ontologiebegriff,” in *Zum Geist der Prämoderne* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1985), 84–104.

¹¹⁷ This had been noted by Suárez (*DM*, 1.4.13 [25.29], *DM*, 1.4.29 [25.35], and *DM* 39, proem. 1–2 [26.504–5] and confirmed by other writers later. See, for example, Carleton, *Metaphysica*, disp. 6, sec. 1, n. 2, in *PU*, p. 583; Ignacio Peynado, S.J., *Disputationes in universam Aristotelis Logicam*, tr. 1, prooemialis, disp. 2, sec. 4, n. 71 (Compluti: Sumptibus Collegii Complutensis Societatis Jesu. Apud Josephum Espartosa, Typographum Universitatis, 1721), 83; and Luis de Lossada, S.J., *Logica*, disp. 2, c. 3, n. 6, in *Cursus philosophici* (Barcinonae; Apud Viduam et Filium J. Subirana, 1883), 1:199. Note that logic here is material rather than formal, that is, coming closer to theory of knowledge and epistemology than to analyses of correct ways of thinking. On this, see Doyle, “Extrinsic Cognoscibility,” 61.

times of which I am aware.¹¹⁸ Among the Jesuits, Sebastian Izquierdo (1601–1681) says that the object of metaphysics includes all being, both possible and impossible.¹¹⁹ Antonio Bernaldo de Quiros, S.J. (1613–1668) thinks that logic prescind from real being and being of reason, and in this context he refers to “lovable” (*amabile*), “knowable” (*cognoscibile*), and “intelligible” as terms which are supertranscendental.¹²⁰ Lynch does the same and adds “imaginable” and “willable” (*volibile*) to his list.¹²¹ Silvester Mauro, S.J. (1619–1687) uses “supertranscendental” as synonymous with “intelligible” or “knowable” (*cognoscibile*), which he says includes impossible things and “nothing itself” (*ipsum nihil*).¹²² Moreover, like Timpler, Mauro thinks that impossible objects are necessary in order to grasp the first principle of noncontradiction.¹²³

Around the turn of the next century, J. B. De Ulloa, S.J. (1639–1723) tells us that being is “the supreme genus,” but that knowable is a more supreme genus (*supremum omnium*).¹²⁴ Earlier, Ignacio Peynado, S.J. (1633–1696) declared extrinsic knowability to be univocally common to real beings and beings of reason.¹²⁵ Later, Luis de Losada, S.J. (1681–1748) treats beings of reason both in logic and in metaphysics, mentions “supertranscendent” (*supertranscendens*) on

¹¹⁸ John of St. Thomas, *Logica* I, q. 2, a. 2, ed. Beatus Reiser, in *Cursus philosophicus thomisticus* (Taurini: Marietti, 1930), 1:117, where there are two mentions; and *Illustrationes*, q. 2, a. 2, in *Cursus philosophicus thomisticus*, 1:221b.

¹¹⁹ Sebastian Izquierdo, *Prefatio ad lectorem*, in *Pharus scientiarum*, vol. 1 (Lugduni: Sumptibus C. Bourgeat et M. Lietard, 1659).

¹²⁰ Antonio Bernaldo, *Logica*, tr. 2, disp. 10, sec. 8 in *Opus philosophicum, complectens Tractatus Octo* (Lugduni: P. Borde, 1666), p. 65; see also, tr. I, disp. 2, sec. 4, p. 14.

¹²¹ Lynch, *Dialectica*, L. 3, tr. 3, c. 2, n. 20, in *UPS*, 1:87.

¹²² Mauro, *Summulae*, c. 10, in *QP*, 1:16.

¹²³ “Ita primum et evidentissimum verum est circa impossibile, dum enuntiat *impossibile est idem simul esse et non esse . . .*”; *Logica*, q. 48, in *QP*, 1:483.

¹²⁴ J. B. de Ulloa, *Logica major*, disp. 3, c. 1, n. 3 (Romae: Ex Officina Ca-jet. Zenobii, 1712), 242.

¹²⁵ “. . . ens reale et rationis univoce conveniunt sub hoc conceptu aptum extrinsece cognosci, seu cognoscibile extrinsece . . .”; Ignacio Peynado, *Disputationes in universam Aristotelis Logicam*, tr. 5, disp. 2, sec. 3, n. 47, p. 410.

more than one occasion,¹²⁶ and also says that the doctrine of extrinsic knowability is widespread.¹²⁷

André Semery, S.J. (1630–1717) dropped metaphysics from his three year philosophy course published in 1674, for the reason that most of its concerns had already been covered in logic and other disciplines.¹²⁸ In line with this, it is in logic that he treats supertranscendental terms, examples of which are “intelligible,” “knowable” (*cognoscibile*) and “thinkable.”¹²⁹ The adequate object of the intellect, he tells us, is not transcendental being but rather supertranscendental being, which includes the impossible as well as the possible.¹³⁰ Prior to both the impossible and the possible, supertranscendental being equates with “something” in the broadest sense,¹³¹ and is the equivalent of simply being an object of understanding.¹³² While he follows

¹²⁶ Luis de Lossada, *Institutiones dialecticae, vulgo Summulae*, disp. 4, c. 4, sec. 3, n. 12 (Salmanticae: Ex Typograph. Franc. Garcia Onorato et San Miguel, 1721), 62; and idem, disp. 4, sec. 6, n. 35, p. 67. In this pre-Kantian period, the terms “transcendent” and “transcendental,” as well as “supertranscendent” and “supertranscendental,” are used interchangeably.

¹²⁷ Luis de Lossada, *Metaphysica*, disp. 4, c. 4, n. 47, in *Cursus philosophici*, 10:277; and disp. 1, c. 4, n. 64, 10:51.

¹²⁸ Andreas Semery Remus, *Triennium philosophicum*, ed. Jo. Baptista Passerus (Romae: Typis Tinassii, 1674) 3:1–2; see also Passerus’s preface in vol. 3: “Triennalem Philosophiae cursum quem a Magistro meo diligenter excepi, habes hic amice lector, suos ita distributum in annos; ut nulla ex tribus Scientiis quae toti cursui nomen imponunt, sine aliarum consortio prodeat; sed Metaphysica physicis, utrisque Logica, ex more jam in hac Universitate recepto, promiscua videantur.”

¹²⁹ Semery, *Logica*, disp. 1, c. 1, a. 2, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1:7.

¹³⁰ “. . . dic objectum adaequatum intellectus esse ens, secundum illam latitudinem acceptum, secundum quam non solum possibilis, sed etiam impossibilis comprehendit. . .”; Semery, *Logica*, disp. 4, q. 7, a. 3, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1: 541.

¹³¹ “Quod si hoc nomen *ens* ad eandem amplitudinem extenderis ad quam extendis *aliquid*: poteris etiam cogitare de ente, absque eo quod formaliter cogites de ente reali: ens enim in tam ampla significatione acceptum non solum est terminus transcendens, sed etiam supertranscendens, adeoque indifferens ad possibile, et impossibile, sicut est indifferens ad utrumque ratio objecti”; Semery, *Logica*, disp. 4, q. 3, a. 2, ad 1, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1:499.

¹³² “. . . habebit eandem in significando amplitudinem, quam habet haec alia vox: Objectum: da enim verum esse, quod multi pro vero admittunt, intellectum repraesentare sibi non solum possibilis, sed etiam impossibilis; tam haec, quam illa habebunt rationem objecti respectu potentiae intellectivae: et consequenter ratio objecti erit communis possibili, et impossibili. Igitur si rationem entis adeo extendas, ut aequae late pateat, ac ratio objecti, ratio entis communis evadet possibili, et impossibili”; Semery, *Logica*, q. 2, a. 1, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1:473–4.

Suárez¹³³ in distinguishing between being as the object of the intellect and real being as the object of metaphysics,¹³⁴ Semery regards supertranscendental being as a concept (*ratio*) common to real beings and beings of reason.¹³⁵ Moreover, this concept seems to be univocal and even generic, with a community akin to that of animal divided into rational and irrational, rather than of man divided into real and depicted (*pictus*).¹³⁶ Thus, with no mention of his Calvinist predecessor, Semery has at once gone beyond Timpler's analogous genus of being and has also denied that supertranscendental being, in other words, the intelligible, is the subject of metaphysics.

Wietrowski read Semery and was obviously influenced by him. Like Semery and other Jesuits of the time, Wietrowski thinks that real being itself is not only univocal; it also can be a genus.¹³⁷ As a genus, being will prescind from its differences (such as perseity, inality,

¹³³ See Suárez, *De Anima* IV, c. 1, n. 9 (3.715).

¹³⁴ "Dicendum est: ens reale est objectum adaequatum Metaphysicae"; Semery, *Logica*, disp. ultima, q. 1, a. 3, in *Triennium philosophicum*, p. 787; "... dic latius patere objectum intellectus humani quam objectum Metaphysicae"; *ibid.*, pp. 787–8.

¹³⁵ "... da enim verum esse, quod multi pro vero admittunt, intellectum repraesentare sibi non solum possibile, sed etiam impossibile; tam haec, quam illa habebunt rationem objecti respectu potentiae intellectivae: et consequenter ratio objecti erit communis possibili, et impossibili. Igitur si rationem entis adeo extendas, ut aequae late pateat, ac ratio objecti, ratio entis communis evadet possibili, et impossibili"; Semery, *Logica*, disp. 4, q. 2, a. 1, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1:474; and q. 4, a. 2, 1:514.

¹³⁶ "Quod si adversarius dicat *ens* dividi in possibile et impossibile non ut nomen univocum, sicut dividitur animal in rationale et irrationale; sed ut nomen aequivocum: quo pacto dividitur homo in realem et fictum; dic quod agentes de homine nunquam praemittunt hanc divisionem, assignantes eidem scientiae speculationem utriusque: cum agentes de ente praedictam divisionem praestitant; utpote tribuentes eidem potentiae examen seu considerationem tam impossibilis quam possibiliis. Quis enim tractaturus de homine sic incipit: sciendum est hominem dividi in realem et pictum? Cum ipsi adversarii tractaturi de ente, sic exordiantur: *Ens* dividitur in possibile et impossibile"; Semery, *Logica*, disp. 4, q. 4, a. 2, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1:514–15.

¹³⁷ "... ens ita praecisum potest esse genus respectu suorum inferiorum. ... deinde tum Deus tum creatura, nec non substantia et accidens possunt collocari sub ente tanquam species sub genere, non secus ac homo, equus, leo etc. sub animali"; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 3, n. 3, in *PD*, p. 256.

aseity, or abaliety),¹³⁸ though they may not prescind from it.¹³⁹ While real being is “transcendental,”¹⁴⁰ it is not more transcending than any other genus,¹⁴¹ except inasmuch as it extends to more differences, which accounts for its designation as absolutely transcendental.¹⁴²

Like others before him, Wietrowski thinks real being (that is, transcendental being) is contradictorily opposed to the nonbeing of a chimera,¹⁴³ or to beings of reason, which he says are essentially impossible things.¹⁴⁴ At the same time, he believes there is, superior to real being and being of reason, a concept of “supertranscendental being,” which is thus somehow common between “transcendental being” and its contradictory “transcendental non-being.”¹⁴⁵ Embracing both real being and impossible being, for Wietrowski as for Semery before, this

¹³⁸ “. . . ly Ens nihil aliud dicit formaliter quam posse existere realiter; qui conceptus nulla ratione tangit aut explicat formaliter perseitatem vel in-alietatem, aseitatem vel abalietatem, sicut conceptus formalis animalis non attingit formaliter rationale vel irrationale: adeoque sicut animal praescindi potest a suis differentiis, per quas contrahitur ad certas essentias specificas, cognoscendo illud in ordine ad connotata, et non cognoscendo illud in ordine ad connotata rationalis, ita et Ens praescindi potest a suis differentiis, per quas contrahitur ad essentiam substantiae, accidentis, Dei, vel creaturae, cognoscendo illud in ordine ad existentiam realem, non cognoscendo illud interim in ordine ad specialem modum existentiae realis, puta aseitas, vel perseitas, etc.”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 1, n. 1, in *PD*, pp. 229–30; see also n. 3, pp. 235–6, and n. 4, p. 239.

¹³⁹ “. . . quamvis non possent praescindi differentiae ab Ente”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 1, n. 4, in *PD*, p. 237.

¹⁴⁰ “. . . de Ente transcendente seu reale . . .”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 1, n. 1, in *PD*, p. 232.

¹⁴¹ “Unde concludo absolute, Ens non esse magis transcendens, quam alias rationes superiores”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, n. 2, in *PD*, p. 245.

¹⁴² “Disconveniunt solum in hoc, quod animal, pauciores habeat differentias, quas realiter transcendit; Ens vero habet plures; nempe omnia entia realia; et idcirco etiam Ens dicitur simpliciter esse terminus transcendentalis, non vero animal”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 2, n. 4, in *PD*, p. 251.

¹⁴³ “Conceptus quidditativus Entis realis est duplex, saltem secundum voces: unus, id, cui non repugnat existere realiter; alter, id, quod est oppositum nihilo, seu chimaerae”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 1, n. 1, in *PD*, p. 231; “. . . jam communiter ens reale, prout opponitur enti chimaerico et impossibili, explicatur ab authoribus, his terminis, Ens reale est id cui non repugnat existere realiter . . .”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c.1, n. 2, in *PD*, p. 233.

¹⁴⁴ “Ens rationis essentialiter seu in statu essentiae suae est ens impossibile, quatenus potest cognosci, et existere in cognitione”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 14, c. 2, n. 1, in *PD*, p. 276.

¹⁴⁵ “Praeterea, sicut datur conceptus quidditativus Entis realis et Entis impossibilis, ita etiam datur conceptus quidditativus Entis abstrahentis a possibili seu reali et impossibili, qui conceptus vocatur Ens suprascriptum . . .”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 1, n. 1, in *PD*, p. 232. For the notion of transcendental nonbeing, see c. 2, n. 4, pp. 250–1.

supertranscendental being is coterminous with the concept of an object, of “something,” or of the “intelligible,” “the thinkable,” “the affirmable,” and so forth.¹⁴⁶

Common to real beings and beings of reason, the mark of objectivity is knowability. More exactly, it is extrinsic knowability.¹⁴⁷ This should be contrasted with the traditional, especially Thomistic view (itself rooted in Aristotle¹⁴⁸ but reinforced by St. Thomas’s own metaphysics of *esse*¹⁴⁹) that things are knowable to the extent that they have being in themselves.¹⁵⁰ For Wietrowski and others here, intrinsic knowability, founded upon some intrinsic being of what is knowable, is “transcendental knowability.”¹⁵¹ Extrinsic knowability, which is not

¹⁴⁶ “. . . talis conceptus Entis tam late patet, quam conceptus objecti, seu cognoscibilis, intelligibilis, negabilis, etc. . . .”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 1, n. 1, in *PD*, p. 232; “. . . nam in ea latitudine et amplitudine, in qua sumi potest Ens, etiam sumi potest, ly aliquid, et ly objectum, aut cognoscibile seu intelligibile, in sensu nimirum supratranscendentali; in quo sensu dici et affirmari potest, non solum de Ente reali, sed etiam de non ente reali, seu chimæra”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 2, n. 4, in *PD*, p. 248. For similar equations of supertranscendental being with objectivity, see Lynch, *Metaphysica* V, tr. 1, c. 8, n. 101, in *UPS*, 3:264; Semery, *Logica*, disp. 4, q. 2, a. 1, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1:474; and José de Aguilar, S.J. (d. 1708), *Metaphysica*, tr. 2, sec. 5, subs. 4, n. 322, in *Cursus philosophicus ad Limam*, (Lima-Hispali: J. F. De Blas, 1701), 2:224.

¹⁴⁷ “. . . sed tota illa denominatio quam objectum accipit a conceptibus nostris, est omnino extrinseca objecto, et intrinseca solum nostro intellectui, jam perfecte et adaequate, jam imperfecte et inadaequate concipienti”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 13, c. 3, n. 1, in *PD*, p. 253.

¹⁴⁸ See, for example, *Metaphysics* 2.1.993b30–1.

¹⁴⁹ On St. Thomas here, see Gerald Phelan, “Verum sequitur esse rerum,” *Mediaeval Studies*, 1 (1939): 11–22; also see Joseph Owens, “Judgment and Truth in Aquinas,” *Mediaeval Studies* 32 (1970): 138–58 and Aertsen, “Transcendental Thought,” 13–14.

¹⁵⁰ For example: “Unumquodque, quantum habet de esse, tantum habet de cognoscibilitate”; S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Summa contra gentiles* I, c. 71; “Cum enim unumquodque sit cognoscibile in quantum est ens actu . . . illa quae habent esse efficiens et imperfectum sunt secundum seipsa parum cognoscibilia”; S. Thomae Aquinatis, *In Metaphys.* II, lect. 1, n. 280. Both texts are cited by A. Krempel, *La doctrine de la relation chez saint Thomas: Exposé historique et systématique* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1952), 52. See also Suárez: “. . . quantum unumquodque habet de esse, tantum habet de intelligibilitate . . .”; *DM*, 8.7.7 (25.328); *DM*, 30.15.22 (26.176); and Suárez, *De Scientia Dei* I, c. 8, n. 3, in *Opera Omnia*, 11:328.

¹⁵¹ “Cognoscibilitas transcendentalis est proprietas entis, Con[cedo]. . . .”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 14, c. 2, n. 4, in *PD*, p. 281; cf. Carleton: “. . . intelligibilitas intrinseca seu per proprias species est passio entis realis, concedo. . . .”; *Logica*, disp. 13, sec. 6, n. 2, in *PU*, p. 70; and “Cognoscibilitas, seu veritas intrinseca . . . est aptitudo quam res quaevis ex se et praedicatis suis intrinsecis habet ad terminandam cognitionem . . .”; *Metaphysica*, disp. 3, sec. 1, n. 5, in *PU*, p. 578.

a property founded upon some intrinsic being, is “supertranscendental knowability.”¹⁵²

This raises further questions about supertranscendental being or knowability. Does it have properties, such as unity, truth, and goodness? Semery denied that such properties can be found in impossible things and by inference in supertranscendental being.¹⁵³ If Wietrowski is of another mind, he is not strongly so and he has distinguished transcendental predicates, such as thing, being, one, good, true, and something (in an obviously restricted sense) from supertranscendental predicates such as “intelligible” and “signifiable.” These latter embrace not only real or possible beings but also impossible beings.¹⁵⁴ However, at least in one place he does speak of truth as supertranscendental.¹⁵⁵ At times for others in the same context, “intelligible” seems to somehow equate with “true,”¹⁵⁶ and “lovable” or “willable” with “good.” In this vein, Mauro has explicitly spoken of “supertranscendental truth” and “supertranscendental good.”¹⁵⁷ From this it seems easy enough to infer that if the Scholastic transcendentals could ever have attracted Kant in structuring his critical philosophy,¹⁵⁸ the same might logically have been true for supertranscendental being and its properties—had he known anything about them.

A not unrelated question is whether there can be a science of supertranscendental being. To this question formulated in a way that concentrates on metaphysics and which could conceivably foreshadow Kant’s concern for progression in its regard,¹⁵⁹ Semery answered no. For unlike transcendental being, which has properties of unity, truth, and goodness which may be demonstrated of it,¹⁶⁰ super-

¹⁵² “Cognoscibilitas supratranscendentalis [est proprietas intrinseca entis] N[ego]”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 14, c. 2, n. 4, in *PD*, p. 281; “. . . intelligibilitas intrinseca seu per proprias species est passio entis realis, concedo majorem, intelligibilitas extrinseca, seu per species alienas, nego. Unde ut ostendi in Introductione d. 2. s. 6. n. 5. Intelligibile est terminus supertranscendens”; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 13, sec. 6, n. 2, in *PU*, p. 70.

¹⁵³ Semery, *Logica*, disp. ultima, q. 1, a. 3, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1: 786–7.

¹⁵⁴ Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 14, c. 2, n. 4, in *PD*, 281–2.

¹⁵⁵ Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 14, c. 1, ob. 3, resp., in *PD*, p. 274.

¹⁵⁶ See Luis de Lossada, *Metaphysica*, disp. 1, c. 6, n. 120, in *Cursus Philosophici*, 10: 85–6.

¹⁵⁷ Silvester Mauro, *Opus theologicum in tres tomos distributum*, L. 2, q. 58 (Romae: Typis et Sumptibus Nicolai Angeli Tinassii, 1687), 1:182–7.

¹⁵⁸ On this, see Leisegang, “Über die Bedeutung,” esp. 415–16. Also consider the implications of the citation from Angelelli at note 21.

¹⁵⁹ See, for example, Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B23–4.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Suárez, *DM*, 1.1.28 (25.11).

transcendental being, he says, lacks such properties because impossible objects cannot be one, true, or good.¹⁶¹ For this reason, while supertranscendental being may equate with the knowable in the sense of *cognoscibile*, it is not such in the sense of *scibile*.¹⁶² Further, while it may be the object of the understanding itself, it cannot be the object of any science, including metaphysics.¹⁶³

V

As we have seen, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries various terms were labeled supertranscendental. The term which had pre-eminence was “intelligible.” Supertranscendence, in fact, amounted to intelligibility. More than this, especially for those who espoused impossible objects, the intelligibility here was “extrinsic” rather than intrinsic.

The proponents of impossible objects were well aware of the traditional view that rooted intelligibility in being.¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless, they maintained that the intelligibility common enough to include all things—actual, possible, or impossible—was a denomination from some intellect outside those things. They maintained this directly in face of opposition based upon the traditional demand that community be founded on some intrinsic being.¹⁶⁵ Particularly in the case of im-

¹⁶¹ Semery, *Logica*, disp. ultima, q. 1, a. 3, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1:786–7.

¹⁶² For what is involved here, see John P. Doyle, “Poinsot on the Knowability of Beings of Reason,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 68, no. 3 (1994): 337–62, esp. 357.

¹⁶³ Semery, *Logica*, disp. 4, q. 7, a. 3, in *Triennium philosophicum*, 1:540; disp. ultima, q. 1, a. 3, 1:785–7. With this compare Burley speaking earlier of the “quid est” which Aristotelian science presupposes as at the level of possible being, distinct from “prohibited being”: “Et isto modo intelligitur dictum Philosophi in libro *Posteriorum* ubi dicit quod de subiecto debet precognosci quid est, quia est intelligendo per ‘esse,’ esse non prohibitum. Nam de eclipsi et de tonitruo est sciencia, quamvis non existant”; Shapiro, “Walter Burley’s *De ente*,” 108. The clear implication is that the merely intelligible—that is, Burley’s “maximally transcendent being”—is not what is presupposed for scientific understanding as such.

¹⁶⁴ See, for example: “Contra opponitur primo. Cognoscibilitas est proprietatis entis; ergo impossibile non habet cognoscibilitatem; ac proinde cognosci non potest”; Wietrowski, *Logica*, concl. 14, c. 2, n. 4, in *PD*, p. 281.

¹⁶⁵ See, for example: “Non ratio objecti, si nimirum hoc sumatur prout est idem, atque cognitum extrinsece; ita enim quomodo potest esse ratio intrinseca, et essentialis utrique entis communis, et ab utroque abstracta?”; Lynch, *Metaphysica* V, tr. 2, c. 7, n. 47, in *UPS*, 3:282; the whole context here should be read.

possible objects—since having no being in themselves they could not generate their proper species—intelligibility was extrinsic also inasmuch as it required alien species.¹⁶⁶ Impossible objects could be known, that is, not from anything in themselves but only in a secondary way through the species of other things which presumably could be known in themselves.¹⁶⁷

Moreover, inasmuch as impossible objects could not have being in themselves anterior to the mind's operation, their being precisely as such, which is pure *esse objectivum*, must be somehow contributed by that operation or must somehow be presupposed on the side of the knower prior to that operation. This is so much the case that at times the proponents of purely impossible objects will regard them as creations of human knowers, who in this have a god-like status.¹⁶⁸ Here a further parallel may be drawn between God's knowledge and that of human beings. Just as divine knowledge is directed to creatures, without a creature itself being anything Divine, so something impossible may be known through real knowledge even though in itself that impossible thing is nothing real.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ "Certum est objectum impossibile non emittere species, cum neque sit, neque esse possit; sed quam multa intelligimus sine propriis speciebus, mutuantur ab alienis objectis species, quibus haec et illa objecta nostris mentibus objiciamus"; Semery, *Logica*, disp. 4, q. 7, a. 3, in *Triennium philosophicum*, p. 540.

¹⁶⁷ However, see in this connection a reported opinion of Izquierdo, the implications of which are immense: "Supponit quarto: Animal rationale hominis earum rerum esse quae cognoscuntur per species alienas, atque adeo non in se, sed in phantasmatis substitutis"; Peynado, *Disputationes in universam Aristotelis Logicam*, tr. 2, disp. 2, sec. 1, n. 6, p. 134; for Izquierdo himself, see esp.: "Intellectus noster pro hoc statu sine usu speciei alienae, atque adeo sine phantasmate substituto nihil omnino iudicare valet"; *Pharus scientiarum*, disp. 2, q. 3, prop. 2, 1:68.

¹⁶⁸ ". . . licet enim Deus concurrere debeat ad omnem actionem realem, non tamen metaphoricam, cum enim cognitio sit productio metaphorica formaliter ut cognitio est (producimus enim Ens Rationis illud cognoscendo). Deus autem licet physice ad cognitionem creatam concurrat, cum tamen per eam non intelligat, non potest immediate et metaphorice cum intellectu concurrere ad Entis Rationis productionem, quod, ut dixi, non producitur nisi cognoscendo"; Carleton, *Logica*, disp. 15, sec. 3, n. 8, in *PU*, p. 76. Connect with this the conserving role of the human intellect and its transcendence from its product indicated in notes 48, 50, and 51.

¹⁶⁹ See Wietrowski: ". . . sicut cognitio Dei cognoscit creaturas, quin ipsa creatura sit aliquid in se Divinum, ita impossibile cognoscitur per cognitionem realem, licet ipsum in se nihil sit reale"; *Logica*, concl. 14, cap. 2, n. 4, ad. 4, in *PD*, p. 282.

Finally, extrinsic intelligibility—not rooted in the being of things themselves, but contributed by an intellect outside such things, especially involving alien species, and common not just to impossible items but to all objects of understanding—was for its patrons identical with objectivity as such. That is to say again that the concept of super-transcendental being was coterminous with the concept of being an object.¹⁷⁰

VI

Remarkably, especially inasmuch as it has been so often overlooked, Kant himself recognized the need for such an all-embracing conception in at least two places of which I am aware. Indeed, in the first of these places he seems to indicate a starting point of his transcendental philosophy to be in the concept of an object in general (*ein Gegenstand überhaupt*), wide enough to embrace both the possible and the impossible.

So in both editions of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (A, 1781; B, 1787) he has written:

The supreme concept with which it is customary to begin a transcendental philosophy is the division into the possible and the impossible. But since all division presupposes a concept to be divided, a still higher one is required, and this is the concept of an object in general, taken problematically, without its having been decided whether it is something or nothing.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ See notes 132, 135, and 146.

¹⁷¹ “Der höchste Begriff, von dem man eine Transzendentalphilosophie anzufangen pflegt, ist gemeinlich die Einteilung in das Mögliche und Unmöglichliche. Da aber alle Einteilung einen eingeteilten Begriff voraussetzt, so muss noch ein höherer angegeben werden, und dieser ist der Begriff von einem Gegenstande überhaupt (problematisch genommen, und unausgemacht, ob er etwas oder nichts sei)”; *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 290/B 347, in *Werke*, 3:306. The translation is by Norman Kemp Smith in *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, 294. There are further questions here about knowing this general object without knowing whether it is something or nothing. I believe the thought itself reflects the tradition at least as far back as the “famous argument” (see Di Vona, *I concetti*, 142 and 415) of Duns Scotus to the effect that we can be certain that something is univocally a being without knowing whether it is infinite or finite, God or a creature. For this, see Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, disp. 3, q. 1; 3(1954): 18, n. 27.

Later (1797), in the Introduction to his *Metaphysik der Sitten*, we read:

Teachers of ontology likewise begin with the concepts of something and nothing, without being aware that these are already members of a division for which the concept divided is missing. This concept can only be that of an object in general.¹⁷²

While hardly indicative of any crossing from knowledge to things in themselves, Kant's missing concept here does seem *prima facie* similar to the supertranscendental being of seventeenth-century Scholastic proponents of impossible objects. Dare I say further that their concept is in fact a missing link between the entirely a posteriori doctrine of earlier philosophy and the a priori doctrine of Kant? The temptation is exciting. Yet recalling the exchange between Hinske and Angelelli, I will not assert that the doctrine of supertranscendentals was in the direct ancestry of Kant.

What I will say is that it fills his bill for a "missing" concept above the division of possible and impossible. Beyond that, I see supertranscendental being, the equivalent of extrinsic intelligibility or objectivity as such, bridging the gap between medieval transcendentals and Kantian transcendentals, one entirely on the side of the known and the other on the side of the knower. Transcending the previous doctrine of transcendentals, for those espousing impossible objects supertranscendentals must be founded somehow anterior to all actual or possible beings which present themselves to human minds.

At the same time, I believe Kant was right when he noted the inattention here of "teachers of ontology." For, *mirabile dictu*, the concept of supertranscendental being, with its arguable entailment of supertranscendental unity, truth, and goodness, seems to have disappeared from eighteenth-century philosophical textbooks. I have checked many and have up to now come away empty handed.¹⁷³ To

¹⁷² "Sowie die Lehrer der Ontologie vom Etwas und Nichts zuoberst anfangen, ohne inne zu werden, dass dieses schon Glieder einer Einteilung sind, dazu der eingeteilte Begriff fehlt, der kein anderer als der Begriff von einem Gegenstande überhaupt sein kann"; Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysik der Sitten*, Introduction, 3 (AK VI, 218n), ed. Karl Vorländer (Hamburg: Verlag von Felix Meiner, 1966), 20. The translation is by Mary Gregor, in *Immanuel Kant: The Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 46.

¹⁷³ Among those I have looked at are the following: Gaspar Buhon, S.J. (d. 1726), *Philosophia ad mores gymnasiorum, finemque accomodata* (Lugduni: Sumptibus Fratrum Bruyset, 1723); Pál Makó de Kerek Gede, S.J. (1723–1793), *Compendiaria metaphysicae institutio* (Venetiis: Apud Lau-

be sure, as that century developed and in time after, the notion got a few scattered mentions from Scholastic authors.¹⁷⁴ However, its importance was apparently overlooked—about which fact I have my opinion but as yet no demonstrable explanation.

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rentium Basileum, 1784); Christoph Haunhold (1610–1689), *Logica practica in regulas digesta* (Bambergae: Sumptibus Martini Göbhardt, 1752); Caspar Pfliger, S.J. (1665–1730), *Academia Catharinaea: in qua magni Suarezii placita ex universa Aristotelis philosophia cum notis ethico-politicis in L. veterum philosophorum vitas proponuntur* (Olomucii [Olmütz in Moravia]: Typis Joannis Josephi Kylian, 1702); Michel Brochard (d. ca. 1729), *Lexicon philosophicum, sive Index latinorum verborum descriptionumque ad philosophos et dialecticos maxime pertinentium in duas partes distributus: . . .* (Hagae: Apud Henricum du Sauzet 1716); Donati a Transfiguratione Domini, *Introductio in Universam philosophiam* (Campidonae: Ex Ducali Campid. Typographeo per Andream Stadler, 1754); Edme Pourchot (1651–1734), *Exercitationes scholasticae in varias partes philosophiae praesertimque in Aristotelis metaphysicam, sive, Series disputationum ontologicarum naturali ordine dispositarum* (Lugduni: Apud Antonium Boudet, 1711); Laurent Duhan (1656–1726), *Philosophus in utramque partem* (Parisiis: Apud Nicolaum Simart, 1714); Benedetto Angelo Maria Canali, *Cursus philosophicus ad mentem Doctoris solemnns Henrici de Gandavo Ordinis Servorum B.M.V. digestus: in quo veterum ac recentiorum, praesertim Cartesii aliorum athomistarum placitis rejectis, Aristotelicum systema jam pene labens restituitur* (Parmae: Typis Pauli Montii, 1715); Christian Wolff (1679–1754), *Philosophia prima, sive Ontologia* (Francofurti et Lipsiae: In Officina Libraria Rengeriana, 1736), new edition, ed. Jean Ecole (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1962); Friedrich Baumeister (1709–1785), *Elementa philosophiae recentioris methodo Wolfii adornata* (Lucae sed prostant Venetiis: Typis Jacobi Caroboli, 1776); Christian August Crusius (1715–1775), *Entwurf der nothwendigen Vernunft-Wahrheiten* (Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Gleditsch, 1745, reprint Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964); and Baumgarten, *Metaphysica*, 7th ed. (1779).

¹⁷⁴ In the early eighteenth century, in addition to works mentioned in notes above, see for example Miguel Viñas, S.J. (1642–1718), *Philosophia Scholastica*, Laurea I, Pars 1, L. 2, Controv. 2. Examen 8, punct. 1, n. 9 (Genuae: Typis Antonii Casamarae, 1709), 162; and punct. 2, nn. 10, 14, 16, and 21, pp. 162–3. For later references, see J. J. Urraburu, S.J. (1844–1904), *Logica*, d. 1, c. 2, a. 6, in *Institutiones philosophicae* (Vallisoleti: Typis Jos. Emman. A Cuesta, 1890), 1:149–150; Urraburu, *Ontologia*, d. 1, c. 2, a. 3, in *Institutiones philosophicae* (Vallisoleti: Typis Jos. Emman. A Cuesta, 1891) 2:103; and Joseph Gredt, O.S.B., *Metaphysica generalis*, Pars I, c. 1, n. 618, in *Elementa philosophiae aristotelico-thomisticae*, 9th ed. (Barcelona: Editorial Herder, 1951), 2:7.