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A Resume Of The De Potentia Dei Of Saint Thomas Aquinas

Maynard Loeb
Carroll College

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A RESUME OF THE DE POTENTIA DEI

OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

by

Maynard Alfred Loeb

A Dissertation

submitted to the Department of Philosophy

of Carroll College in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the Degree of

Bachelor of Arts

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James R. O'Donnell

Helena, Montana

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INTRODUCTION

In the realm of philosophy, or to be more exact, in the realm of Christian philosophy, St. Thomas Aquinas is undoubtedly the most notable figure. Born in Rocca Sicca, Italy in A.D. 1225, St. Thomas occupied himself at an early age with the question, *Quid est Deus?* This may be called a beginning of his theological and philosophical career. In 1274, after a religious and fruitful life, he died having synthesized most successfully the philosophical inquiries and doctrines of Aristotle with Christian teachings. St. Thomas defined the notion of moderate realism, a theory of universals, and showed the true relation between faith and reason. He perfected the Scholastic method as is most eminently exemplified in the monumental *Summa Theologica*.

During his career as professor, St. Thomas composed the treatises known as the *Quaestiones Disputatae*. This is a series of "Questions" explaining problems arising from the interpretation of Aristotle or of Peter, the Lombard. The series on the Power of God (*De Potentia Dei*, 1259–1263) consisting of eighty-three disputations, were written when St. Thomas was theological lecturer and adviser to the papal court at Rome. In general, the disputations on the Power of God are a classic example of St. Thomas' positive philosophical teaching by way of several objections, and an intervening exposition or discussion, and the replies
to the objections. It is from this series of disputations that the first three questions, namely, On the Power of God, On God's Generating Power, and On Creation, are taken.

It is the hope of the writer, then, that this resume will enable the reader, especially the prospective student of philosophy, to see at a glance something of the Thomistic style and manner of presentation; that it will cause the reader to pause in thought upon the truths behind each article; that, finally, it will stimulate his interest and bring him to read and study the works of St. Thomas himself. Perhaps, by sampling St. Thomas in this way, sufficient interest will be fostered in many so that they will read his writings with attention and with at least some profit.

Moreover, it is necessary to add that only the positive philosophy contained in the first three questions of the De Potentia Dei is summarized here, and we have prescinded from matters of formal Divine Revelation. The edition used in preparation of this summary is the translation made by the English Dominican Fathers and published by Burns Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., London (1932). The references given in that edition have been retained in this summary only where they are pertinent. In addition, the writer has added a brief note to the foremost names in the references and, for the reader's added convenience, the format of the entire summary has been so arranged that the reader may more easily follow the context of the matter.
QUESTION I

ON THE POWER OF GOD

Article I

Is there Power in God?

The reply to this question seems to be in the negative, for:

1. Power is a principle of operation; now God's operation, i.e., His essence, has no principle.

2. Power bears a relation to something more perfect; now only the most perfect should be ascribed to God.¹

3. Power is a principle of relation of God to creatures, and it exists only in our way of thinking, but not in God.

4. Habits, being more perfect than power, are not even in God; less, then, is power in Him.

5. God acts by His essence and it would be derogatory to His simplicity and primacy to speak of Him as acting by His power.

6. The notion of essence is more dignified than that of power; thus only God's essence should be spoken of.

¹ (Cf. Anselm, Monologium, xiv.) St. Anselm (1033-1109), theologian and philosopher sometimes styled as "the Augustine of the eleventh century", is noted for his so-called ontological argument for the existence of God.
Reply 1. When operation is attributed to God the relationship of that which derives its existence from a principle must also be attributed; thus the divine operation has a principle in our way of thinking.

Reply 2. The less perfect, inasmuch as it is perfect in itself, is attributed to designate that which is most perfect.

Reply 3. Power is not the relation signified by the principle but the principle itself.

Reply 4. Habit is in a passive power and is more perfect than it: such a power is not attributable to God.

Reply 5. Since the mere fact that God works by His essence implies that power is in God, power is neither derogatory to God's simplicity and primacy nor does it add anything to it.

Reply 6. Although active power in God and the divine essence are identical and although power indicates something in addition by its manner of signification, it requires a special name: names correspond to ideas.¹

¹ (Cf. Aristotle, Periheri., i.)
7. Primary matter being pure potentiality (potentia) entirely void of act, but God being Pure Act, power (potentia) cannot be in God.

8. Any power apart from its act is imperfect and cannot, therefore, be ascribed to God.

9. Since God's essence alone suffices for His action, it is superfluous to add power to it.

10. Nor does God's power differ from His essence only in our way of thinking, since such a concept, having no corresponding reality, is void.

11. Substance, the most excellent of the predicaments,\(^1\) is not assigned to God.\(^2\) Less should power be ascribed to God, since it is of the lesser predicament of quality.

12. Power in God may be said to be of God's essence differing from it logically; if the distinction is real, power is added to essence; if not, the objection fails.

13. Although all power is for the sake of some eligible end,\(^3\) this cannot be said of God, since He is not for the sake of anything.

14. Energy is a medium between substance and work;\(^4\) since God does not work through a medium, He works neither by energy or power.

15. Active power being a principle of transmutation terminating in another being,\(^5\) cannot be ascribed to God, for God acts without transmutation, e.g. in creation.

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1. Predicaments or Categories are the supreme and ultimate classes into which all beings are divided.

2. (Cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, vii, 6.) Augustine (354-430) synthesized the best elements of pagan philosophy into a system of Christian philosophy.

3. (Cf. Aristotle, *Topica*, iv, 5.) Aristotle (384 B.C.-332 B.C.) represents the greatest pagan original thinker and integrated the speculations of the Pre-Socratic and Socratic schools.

4. (Cf. Dionysius, *De Coelesti et Ecclesiastica Hierarchia*, xi.) Dionysius (6 C. A.D.), called Pseudo-Dionysius, wrote works containing the last exposition of Christian Neo-Platonism.

5. (Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, v, 12; ix, 1.)
Reply 7. This argument proves that there is no passive power in God, which is granted.

Reply 8. God's power is always united to act, but the effects follow in accordance to the divine will and wisdom; thus His power is not always united to its effects.

Reply 9. God's power is not superfluous because it is not an addition to His essence: essence has the formality of power.

Reply 10. Reality corresponds to the concept (1) immediately, i.e. when the intellect conceives an idea of a thing outside the mind, and (2) mediately, i.e. when the intellect considers the result of its action by reflecting on itself, e.g. the intellect's understanding of a genus in which are many species, but there not being a thing which is a genus.

Reply 11. Power of the second species of quality is not assigned to God Who acts immediately by His essence.

Reply 12. God is represented by various forms in the subject of the mind because of His incomprehensibility, but that to which the various concepts of divine attributes correspond is one and the same thing.

Reply 13. Active power is not for the sake of its effects even in the physical order, much less is the divine power for the sake of its effects.

Reply 14. God does not work through a medium.

Reply 15. Active power may be rightly ascribed to God, although His action does not always involve a change.
16. Since active and passive power are in the same subject\(^1\) and since passive power is unbecoming to God, active power is also.

17. Contrary privation attaches to active power\(^2\), since contraries have the same subject by nature there can be no privation in God.

18. Since action is not attributable to God, there can not be active or passive power in Him.

On the contrary, all operation proceeds from power. Since operation is supremely attributable to God, power is also. Power is in relation to first act, which is form as the end of operation and to second act which is operation; active power corresponds to second act and passive power corresponds to first act. Since God is Pure and Primary Act, active power which is a principle of action is becoming to Him. The mind describes God as the most perfect being by attributing to Him the perfections found in creatures, although it first removes the faults from the perfections of creatures. Thus operation is ascribed to God inasmuch as it is an ultimate perfection, not by reason of that into which operation passes, and power is attributed to God by reason of that which is permanent by reason of that which is made complete by operation.

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1. (Cf. Aristotle, Op. cit. v, 12; ix, 1.)
2. Ibid.
Reply 16. Active power and passive power do not coincide in a being which is moved by another.

Reply 17. There is no contrary in God because He is not a genus.

Reply 18. Only that action is not in God which, as in nature, is both active and passive.
Article II

Is God's Power Infinite?

Again the reply to this question seems to be in the negative, for:

1. Since no passive power in nature corresponds to an infinite power in God, an infinite power in God would be fruitless.

2. There is no proportion between an infinite and a finite power, nor is there a proportion between the time taken by either. Since finite power takes time to move, infinite power will move in no time. Thus if God's power is infinite, it will always act without time.

3. Nor can God's omnipotence be changed by His will, since it is natural to an infinite power to act without time.

4. God cannot produce an infinite effect.

5. Power is proportionate to operation, but God's operation is simple; now the simple and the infinite are incompatible.

6. Infinity is an attribute of quantity. Since there is no quantity in God, His power cannot be infinite.

7. Since God's power is distinct from other things, it is also finite.

8. The infinite denotes something endless. The end of perfection and the end of intention, denoting perfection, belong to God.

9. If God's power is infinite, its effects would be infinite; but many other things have potentially infinite effects. Thus many other powers will be infinite, which is impossible.

10. Finish is something excellant and as such should be ascribed to God.

1. (Cf. Aristotle, Physica, i, 1.)
Reply 1. Nothing in God is fruitless, since God and everything in Him are an end.

Reply 2. Infinity of magnitude is proportionate to infinity of time, but it does not follow that infinity apart from magnitude is not proportionate to infinity of time.

Reply 3. God's will cannot change His power, but it can limit its effect.

Reply 4. The fact of a being created from nothing argues that being's imperfection and potentiality; this is incompatible with the infinite.

Reply 5. Privative infinity is repugnant to simplicity, but negative infinity is not.

Reply 6. This argument applies to privative infinity.

Reply 7. That nothing can be added to God, does not prove that He is finite.

Reply 8. End, a perfection, is ascribed to God in the sense that He is essentially the end, not denominatively finite.

Reply 9. A creature in itself can produce an infinity of effects in some particular respect, but only God in His infinite power can produce an infinity of effects in all respects.

Reply 10. Same as the reply to objection 8.
11. God's power is not infinite, because infinity implies parts and matter,\(^1\) which in turn imply imperfection.

12. A term is neither finite nor infinite;\(^2\) but God's power is the term of all things.

13. If God's power is infinite, its effects are infinite, since God works with His whole power.

God's power, on the contrary, is infinite because it is becoming to it to be grasped by neither time, place, nor mind. His power is also infinite since it is immeasurable.\(^3\) A thing is infinite by way of privation and by being endless: infinity is not ascribed to God in the former sense, for that denotes imperfection, but in the latter sense, since God and all His attributes are without limit. However, act can be finite on the part of the agent and on the part of the recipient. Since God is Pure Act, His power is limited neither by agent nor by recipient. Further, God partaking of all being in its widest sense, His power in reference to things never produces so many effects that it cannot produce more, nor does it act with such intensity that it cannot act more intensely.

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2. Ibid., i, 6.
3. (Cf. Hilary, De Trinitate, viii.) Hilary (d. 368) is one of the Latin Fathers and belongs more to the history of theology.
Reply 11. Same as the reply to objection 6.

Reply 12. Same as the reply to objection 6.

Reply 13. Although God does work with His whole power, yet His effect is limited by His will and by the order of reason.
Article III

Are Those Things Possible to God Which Are Impossible To Nature?

Again the reply seems to be in the negative, for:

1. God is the author of nature and cannot do what is contrary to it, i.e., the things that nature cannot do.

2. The impossible in nature involves the principle of contradiction; thus the naturally impossible is a contradiction.

3. Since God cannot do what is impossible to reason, He cannot do what is impossible to nature.

4. God cannot do what is impossible in nature because He cannot know what is false in nature.

5. God cannot do anything naturally impossible because some things are impossible with respect to His power.

6. God would be acting counter to the truth of which He is the source if He could do the naturally impossible.

7. It is unbecoming to God to make yes and no to be true at the same time. Now God cannot do what is in the least unbecoming to Him.¹

8. For God to do the naturally impossible would be acting counter to His art.

9. What is impossible in itself is more impossible than the accidentally impossible; but God cannot do what is accidentally impossible.²

On the contrary, it seems that God can do all impossible things, for:

¹ (Cf. Anselm, Cur Deus Homo, i, 24.)
² (Cf. Aristotle, Ethica, vi, 2; Augustine, Contra Faust. xxii, 5.)
Reply 1. Whatever God does contrary to the wonted course of nature is not contrary to nature, but natural or quasi-natural, because God is the author and controller of nature.

Reply 2. Things impossible by reason of a lack of natural power do not involve the incompatibility of affirmation and negation as such and are not intrinsically impossible.

Reply 3. Philosophical reasoning regards impossibilities in themselves, not in relation to power.

Reply 4. The naturally false is simply false.

Reply 5. Some things are impossible in themselves, and some with respect to a power; but this does not limit God's power.

Reply 6. God does not destroy what is already true, but makes what otherwise had been true not to be true.

Reply 7. Same as the reply to objection 6.

Reply 8. God acts in accordance to His art when He changes nature since His art extends not only to things made but to many others.

Reply 9. An accidental impossibility under some adventitious circumstance which is impossible in itself involves a contradiction.
1a. To say that God cannot do the impossible is to limit His power, which is contrary to what is proved above. 1

2a. The truth of the principle of contradiction cannot be a hindrance to God's action, since He is not limited by something in existence.

3a. The impossible connotes privation of power; however, privation is not susceptible of degrees.

4a. Nothing can oppose or resist God's power.

Now it is answered that a thing is possible or impossible in two ways: 2

1. In itself by mutual exclusion of terms: such exclusion corresponds to some opposition which connotes affirmation and negation; 3 this cannot be ascribed to an active power because the act of an active power terminates in being; now for yes and no to be true at the same time cannot have the nature of being nor even of non-being.

2. In respect of power: (a) if there is an inherent defect in power, (b) when the power is hindered extrinsically, and (c) when the impossible cannot be a term of action, i.e., when there is an intrinsic impossibility. Because God's power is infinite, it is neither defective nor impeded from without.

1. Supra, Article II, 7 ff.
2. (Cf. Aristotle, Metaphysica, v, 12.)
3. (Ibid., x, 4.)
Reply 1a. God's power is not limited outside the range of possibility.

Reply 2a. The converse of the principle of contradiction is a contradiction and cannot be the term of action of an active power.

Reply 3a. Privation can be susceptible of degrees; thus that which is impossible in itself may be said to be more impossible than a thing which is impossible simply.

Reply 4a. Here again is involved a contradiction.
Article IV

Should a Thing Be Judged Possible or Impossible With Reference to Lower or to Higher Causes?

It seems that higher causes should be considered, for:

1. Wise men are considered foolish when referring possibility and impossibility to nature.

2. A thing is judged possible or impossible in reference to a first power.

3. The effect of a first or higher cause is a better guide for judgment than that of a secondary cause.

4. A thing impossible to lower causes is sometimes done with respect to higher causes.

5. The possibility of the world did not rest on lower causes.

On the other hand, it seems that lower causes should be considered:

1a. An effect should be judged possible in reference to the proximate or lower cause on which its possibility is based.

2a. A thing possible to lower causes is also possible in regard to higher causes and, therefore, by its universality, simply possible.

3a. It is impossible for all effects to be necessary if they proceeded only from higher causes.

4a. Nothing would be impossible if everything would be impossible or possible in reference to God alone.

5a. Disposition, necessity, and action, as being related to one another, are to be found only in lower causes.

It is answered that judgment about the impossibility or possibility
Reply 1. Wise men are foolish for judging that things impossible with regard to lower causes are simply impossible to God.

Reply 2. The possible is compared to power as object to power.

Reply 3. The influence of a first cause upon an effect is determined by the proximate cause.

Reply 4. A thing is not possible to a higher cause in every way.

Reply 5. The existence of the world was possible to a higher cause because it is a possibility in itself.

Reply 1a. Here the effect of a cause is considered.

Reply 2a. This does not follow with impossibility, but it is the other way around.

Reply 3a. A thing is not to be judged possible or impossible to a cause through a likeness in point of possibility or impossibility to a cause.

Reply 1a. Only that which is possible in itself is possible to God.

Reply 5a. These things are subject to higher causes; thus active power is not considered in the argument.

\[
\text{of a thing is considered either with reference to the one who judges or to the thing in question. Doubt may occur only about the judgment of the effects of lower causes since they may be produced by both lower and higher causes. If it is to be judged with respect to the nature of the thing in question, the effects must be judged possible or impossible in reference to their proximate causes to which those effects are especially likened.}
\]
Article V

Can God Do What He Does Not?

It seems that God cannot do what He does not, for:

1. God does not foresee that He will do otherwise than He does.
2. God cannot act otherwise than His foreknowledge foresees.
3. God, by natural necessity, can act only in accordance with His divine wisdom.

4. Absolute and conditional power should not be placed in God since these are in mutual contradiction.

5. God's power cannot be separated from His wisdom since it is equal to and always regulated by it.

6. Since what God has done is just, He cannot do otherwise.

7. Since it befits God's goodness to communicate itself in an orderly fashion, He cannot act but orderly.

8. God wills to do only what He does since His power follows His will.

9. God has only those ideas in His mind which produce the things that exist.¹

10. God has ideas of those things only that He has done, does, or will do.

¹ (Cf. Dionysius, De Divinis Nominibus, v.)
Reply 1. God is able to do other than He foresees; He is not able
to do what is not foreknown by Him.

Reply 2. This is not to the point since God's foreknowledge of
what He will do is commensurate with what He actually does.

Reply 3. This objection is to be held because nature is confined
to one process of action, but the knowledge of divine wisdom extends to
many other things.

Reply 4. Absolute and the conditional are ascribed to divine power
solely from our point of view.

Reply 5. God's power is to be considered without reference to His
wisdom.

Reply 6. That which God has not yet done may be just potentially,
but it is not yet in existence; yet if it were, what He does would be
just.

Reply 7. God's goodness can communicate itself in ways other than
in the way in which things are actually orderly.

Reply 8. Absolutely God can wish to do other things than those
that are.

Reply 9. It is not to be implied that divine ideas actually exist
at present inasmuch as they are productive of things.

Reply 10. God does not have ideas of things that have not, do not,
and will not exist; but He does have incomplete ideas as thought out
mental concepts.
11. God does not wish to do except what He does, for "God is unable to do that alone which He does not wish to do."¹

12. God being unchangeable, He cannot be indifferent to either of two contraries and thus His power is fixed on one thing.

13. God cannot do or not do except for the best reason.

14. Since God is supremely good, He can do only one thing—the best.

On the other hand, God can do more than He does because:

1. His power is infinite.

2. His power surpasses His works.

3. His power is endless act not terminated by what He has done.

It is answered that there is a twofold error regarding the question at issue: (1) that God acts from natural necessity; this is false since that which so acts cannot determine its end but must have it determined by an intelligent agent; (2) that God cannot act beside the order of divine justice and wisdom; this is false in an absolute sense, i.e., if one thinks that the created order is commensurate and necessary to divine goodness, which it is not; however, by the supposition that God does not wish to do otherwise, or that He foresaw that He would not do otherwise, the tenet is correct as long as the supposition stands, but apart from it God can do otherwise.

¹ (Cf. Augustine, De Symbolo, i.)
Reply 11. The meaning of this argument is not to the point.

Reply 12. God has free will since His will is not confined to one issue as regards things to be done.

Reply 13. The best reason for God's action would remain even though He made other things.

Reply 14. Whatever else that can be referred to God's goodness is still the best.
Article VI

Can God Do What Others Can Do?

The reply to this question seems to be in the affirmative, for:

1. Evil deeds are possible to a god or a wise man.\(^1\)
2. God can do evil inasmuch as He directs man's will whithersoever He wills, be it good or evil.
3. Since God's power is superior to man's, He can do what man does.
4. God does evil by omitting to do the good things that He could do.
5. God does evil inasmuch as He does not prevent evil and wicked deeds which He can prevent.

On the contrary, it is answered that God is unable to do a thing in respect of His will inasmuch as He cannot do what He cannot will. Nor can He will what is contrary to His goodness. God cannot do certain things in respect of His infinite power as in the case of certain negations; thus God cannot fail or move since this would signify a lack of power and be an imperfection. Further, God cannot do a thing that is a contradiction, as stated in Article 5.

Reply 1. God could do evil things if He so willed.

Reply 2. God is said to incline man's will to evil, not as though He infused malice into it, but by permitting and directing the evil.

Reply 3. This argument applies to perfection, not to lack of power.

Reply 4. God does not omit these things since He is not bound to do them, which is a necessary condition for omission.

Reply 5. Here again God is not bound to prevent wicked deeds.

\(^{1}\) (Cf. Aristotle, Topica, iv, 5.)
Article VII

Is God Almighty?

It seems that God is almighty for the following reasons:

1. God is called almighty because He can simply do all things.

2. Nor is God called almighty because He can absolutely do all things, for then the implication that He can do all things is true only in an accommodated sense thus limiting the divine power.

3. "He is called almighty for no other reason but that He can do whatsoever He wills."¹ This reason is insufficient since it implies an imperfection of God's will as willing the impossible.

4. God seems to be almighty because He can do what is possible to nature in which case His power would not surpass that of nature, or He can do all things possible to Himself; now everyone can do what is possible to himself.

5. If God is called almighty and all-knowing, He may be called all-willing.

6. It is answered that, in seeking the reason for God's omnipotence, the reason that accounts for the relation between operation and its object must be sought; thus God is called almighty because He can do all things that are possible in themselves, i.e., those that are not self-contradictions.

¹ (Cf. Augustine, Enchiridion, xcvi.)
Reply 1. God is almighty in the sense that He can do all things that are able to be done.

Reply 2. If universality were confined within the genus of things possible, this argument would hold.

Reply 3. Augustine means that this reason is a sufficient sign of God's omnipotence.

Reply 4. The distinction between things possible to nature and those which are possible to God is not to the point.

Reply 5. God cannot be called all-willing since the will being the determining force covers only those things to which it determines power and knowledge.
QUESTION II

OF GOD'S GENERATING POWER

Article I

Is There a Generative Power In God?

It seems that there is no generative power in God because:

1. There is no begetting in God since this involves matter and passive power.

2. That which is begotten is a composite; but there is no composition in God.

3. Every power, active or passive, is imperfect in comparison with its act.

4. The divine nature in its effectiveness is itself the generative principle and does not work through a power.

5. Generative power is not a perfection.

6. Generative power implies an intercourse of sexes.

7. The existence of generation in God is not a possible or a contingent because it is eternal and thus cannot be ascribed to God.

8. In God there cannot be something which has its being entirely from another for such things are impossible, untrue, and non-existent.

9. The divine nature cannot be communicated to another supposit since it is perfectly and perpetually in God.

10. Generation is a kind of change; but God is unchangeable.
Reply 1. What is begotten in God does not receive the form of the begetter as matter receives form, but as a supposit has the specific nature.

Reply 2. Since the divine nature is self-subsistent, it needs nothing material for subsistence in its communication.

Reply 3. This applies to power and act which are distinct from one another, which is not the case in God.

Reply 4. Whatever is a principle whereby an action is done is of the nature of power whether by essence or by an accidental medium.

Reply 5. Generation among creatures suggests imperfection because their essence and nature are distinct. This is not the case in God.

Reply 6. This considers generation in the material world.

Reply 7. This holds when power is accompanied by movement, but God's generative power is not accompanied by movement.

Reply 8. A creature cannot receive being in that perfection with which it is in God.

Reply 9. Nothing prevents God's nature from being in another supposit since it is the end and is not for the sake of an end.

Reply 10. Divine generation is not a change in the sense that a common nature is received by some matter which is the subject of change.

Thus it is argued that the self-subsistent divine nature in its communication needs no material thing for its subsistence. And since the divine essence is its own being it does not receive being from its supposit; thus it is both the communicator and the one to whom it is communicated, remaining the same in both. An example of such a communication is in the intellect when it conceives the essence of things in knowledge.
Article II

Is Generation Attributed to God Essentially or Notionally?*

It seems that generation is attributed to God notionally, for:

1. Power being a kind of principle must as a principle be notional when referring it to a divine person.

2. Nor is generation both notional and essential: in God there are two categories, substance and relation; now since a thing cannot be in two categories, generative power cannot include both substance and notional act.

3. As the idea of principle is incompatible with God's essence, so is power which involves a principle.

4. Power, like knowledge and will, does not signify essence and notion simultaneously; rather it seems to signify only notion.

On the other hand, generative power should be attributed to the essence as the creative power is. However, although power implies the relation of a principle, it does not follow that it is predicated of God relatively because as an absolute form, it belongs to the genus of quality. Since an action done by virtue of the common nature takes on a certain mode from its proper principles, generative power does not signify essence alone. Thus the generative power denotes at the same time the essence and the property.

* i.e., as a property or note of a divine person.
Reply 1. Power is a principle of operation which is not a notional act of God.

Reply 2. There is no comparison here, since in God relation is really the very essence.

Reply 3. That whereby generation takes place is common to both generator and the generated, wherefore the power is the principle whereby the effect is produced.

Reply 4. In God power is a co-signification with relation, which does not apply to knowledge or will.
Article III

In the Act of Generation Does the Generative Power Come into Action at the Command of the Will?

The reply to this question seems to be in the affirmative, for:

1. The will may be considered the principle of generation in God because it proceeds from his intellect.

2. Since God is not moved by another, no action in Him, not even generation, is from nature, but from His will, since all agents are reduced to will and nature.\(^1\)

3. Since will is free its action must precede that of nature since nature is determined to one course of action.

4. Generation must be affected by the will since the Divine will cannot but will its last end, viz., to communicate His goodness, which is best done by generation.

5. Since human generation is subject to will, the more does divine generation seem subject to will.

It is answered that the object of divine generation may be referred to the will as its object, but since the will is free, it can will or not will; thus that which has the will for its principle can be or not be. However, although the will is indifferent to some things, it has a natural inclination in regard to its last end, which in this case is God Himself. Thus God naturally wills to generate inasmuch as God's will is not unable to will Himself.

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Reply 1. Generation in God does not signify an act terminating in a creature, wherefore God's intellect, precedent to eternal acts terminating in creatures, need not precede generation. Thus, since the will's object is presupposed to its act, generation must proceed from the intellect naturally so as not to be commanded by the will.

Reply 2. Nature is determined by something for some particular end, but a nature which is itself the end and is not directed to an end requires no determination from without.

Reply 3. This holds if volitional and natural actions are in different subjects, but in the same subject nature is logically prior to will and also prior inasmuch as the will can remain undetermined with regards some things, e.g., in man, his natural desire for happiness.

Reply 4. Here is proven only that God wills generation, which denotes a concomitant will regarding generation as its object, not that of which it is the principle.

Reply 5. Human generation is effected by a natural force through the medium of the motive power which is subject to the will; this does not apply to God.

(The Whole of Article IV is omitted in this summary.)
Article V

Is the Generative Power Included in Omnipotence?

Again the reply to this question seems to be negative, for:
1. God is almighty because He can do whatsoever He wills, where­
fore the power of divine generation seems to be subject to divine will,
which is contrary to what is proved in Article III.

2. Omnipotence refers to things possible in themselves, but what
God generates must be not of possible things, but necessary.

3. Generative power does not come under the heading of omnipotence
as does the formation of other things.

4. Since there is no subject-matter in God, divine generation can­
not be the subject-matter of omnipotence.

It is answered that generative power belongs to omnipotence simply;
generation denotes action with a certain respect and generative power
denotes power with a certain respect; thus generation is the action of
God the generator, and generative power is the divine omnipotence as in
the divine generator.

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1. (Cf. Damascene, De Fide Orthodoxia, iii, 21; iv, 19.)
**Reply 1.** That God can do whatever He wills is not the whole meaning of omnipotence and is in reference to creatures.

**Reply 2.** The possible things to which omnipotence refers do not include only the contingent but also the necessary which can be brought into being by divine power.

**Reply 3.** Divine generation and formation of creatures are of the same kind by analogy, not univocally.

**Reply 4.** What God generates is the subject-matter of omnipotence in the sense that subject-matter indicates the object of power.
Article VI

Are the Generative and Creative Powers the Same?

The generative and creative powers do not seem to be the same, for:

1. Generation which is the operation of nature must be different from creation which is the work of the will since will and nature are not the same principle.

2. Powers are distinguished by their acts; but generation and creation are different acts.

3. The generative and creative powers do not admit of a same predication, wherefore they are not the same being.

4. The creative power logically precedes the generative power as the essential precedes the notional.

On the contrary, since God's power and essence are the same, there is only one divine power; therefore generative and creative power are the same. It is answered that power in relation to an essential act, e.g., creation, and power in relation to a notional act, e.g., generation, are the same in comparison with one another. Yet each power has its own peculiar relationship to its act. Thus these two powers are the same as powers but different as their relationship to different acts.
Reply 1. In God nature and will are the same, but in creatures they are different.

Reply 2. Diversity of the objects of power does not imply division of power; rather the higher the power, the wider its scope.

Reply 3. The generative and creative powers admit of a same common predication considered as to their substance, and are the same thing.

Reply 4. There is order of first and second between these powers as being distinct and this order is in reference to their acts; thus generation preceded creation; but as regards essence these powers are the same.
QUESTION III

CREATION

Article I

Can God Create a Thing from Nothing?

It would seem that God cannot create from nothing, for:
1. A commonly received axiom is that out of nothing comes nothing.¹
2. Since whatever is made must first have its potentiality in matter or in a subject, it cannot be made out of nothing.
3. A thing cannot come into being from absolute non-being because there is an infinite distance between being and absolute non-being which cannot be crossed.
4. God cannot act on absolute non-entity because of the utter dissimilarity between God and non-entity.²
5. Nor does this apply to an agent whose action is distinct from his substance, for an agent separated from matter would act of himself, yet his action would not be his substance.
6. Anything in nature cannot come from nothing just as no conclusion can be drawn from no premises.

¹ (Cf. Aristotle, Physica, i, 8.)
² (Cf. Aristotle, De Generatione et Corruptione, i, 7.)
Reply 1. This is an axiom of the physicists, for a natural agent acts by movement and requires a subject of movement.

Reply 2. Sometimes a thing is said to be possible, not in respect of some potentiality, but because it involves no contradiction of terms. Further, the world was possible by virtue of the active power of the agent.

Reply 3. There is an infinite distance between being and non-being, but it is possible to pass from non-being to being that is finite.

Reply 4. Neither non-being nor its opposite hold the position of patient except accidentally when acted upon by an action.

Reply 5. An agent acting without matter acts without matter as a prerequisite for the agent but not without matter required for the patient.

Reply 6. As a conclusion proceeds from the understanding of first principles, so does creation, the principle of all movement.

1. (Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, v, 12.)
2. (Ibid., vii, 3.)
7. The preposition from (from nothing) does not connote a cause of being since nothing cannot be a cause, nor does it connote order since there is no order between being and non-being.

8. Since God's power is active it requires a thing which is the subject of a change.

9. The cause of the differences of perfections in beings must be assigned to matter, not to God Who is simple.

10. If the last instant of non-being and the first instant of being are identical, two contradictories are true; if distinct, since there is time between the two, there is a mean between affirmation and negation; but both sides are impossible.

11. Whatever was created was made and becoming not simultaneously, for that implies that it was made and not made at the same time; nor does its becoming precede its having been made since there cannot be a subject of making in creation.

12. God cannot create because He, acting forasmuch as He is actual, cannot make prime matter which is not actual.

13. Again God cannot make prime matter because He cannot have an idea of formless prime matter.

14. God being the principle of perfection and matter being the principle of imperfection, things must have been made from matter.

15. A thing cannot be made from nothing (a) not as from a subject, since non-being cannot be a subject; (b) not as a composite, since there is nothing common to being and non-being; (c) not as an opposite, since non-being differs more from being than beings of the same genus.

16. Whatever could be made from nothing would have to be made accidentally from that which is essential.
Reply 7. When the negative bears only on the preposition, the meaning is that a thing is made indeed, but that there was nothing existing before it was made.

Reply 8. This applies to a natural active power.

Reply 9. Diversity among things arises from the ordering of divine wisdom, not from their matter.

Reply 10. A thing made from nothing begins in an instant and its non-being is not in that instant; further, the instant and time in creation are only imaginary.

Reply 11. That which is made from nothing becomes and is already made simultaneously.

Reply 12. Matter, form, and accident are not created but con-created since they are not in themselves subsistent beings; further, prime matter is like unto God in the sense that it partakes of some being.

Reply 13. Though an idea is a form, there can be an idea of matter insofar as matter reflects the divine essence.

Reply 14. Imperfections in creatures are to be ascribed to the fact that the creatures are made from nothing.

Reply 15. Being and non-being cannot coexist and that wherefrom a thing is made must be in contact with the thing made, not simultaneous with it.

Reply 16. A thing is said to be made from nothing in the sense that \textit{from} connotes order, thus as a thing is made \textit{from} its opposite \textit{per se}. 
17. If God makes something out of nothing, there is nothing to receive being by God's action; thus God can make things only from something already existing.

On the contrary, God can make something out of nothing because (a) He requires no matter to act upon since He does not act by virtue of an accident;¹ (b) His power is greater than that of nature which makes things from potency. Further, God is all Act in comparison with Himself and in comparison with other things in act; thus He produces the whole subsistent being by His action without anything having existed before.

1. (Cf. Avicenna, Metaphysics, vii, 2.) Avicenna (980–1037), an Arabian philosopher of the East, was the first of the Arabians to depart from the Neo-Platonic interpretation of Aristotle.
Reply 17. God simultaneously gives being and produces that which receives being.
Article II

Is Creation a Change?

It seems that creation is a change, for:

1. As in change there is a succession of being, so there is in creation inasmuch as being is produced after non-being.

2. As privation of a form is the term of generation, so non-being is the term of creation.

3. Since transition from relative non-being to being is a change, the more is creation a change, i.e., a transition of absolute non-being into being.

4. The created is changed or moved from non-being before to being now.

5. What is created and now actual is changed from the potency it was before creation.

On the contrary, none of the six kinds of movement or change are creations: nor is creation, therefore, a change. It is answered that in every change there must be something common to both terms for it to be a transition from one thing to another; nor are the terms incompatible in reference to different subjects. In creation there is no common subject either actual or potential. There is no continuous time since time was created with the world. Thus creation is not a change except in the imagination or metaphorically.

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1. (Cf. Aristotle, Physica, v, 1.)
2. (Cf. Aristotle, Categorias, 11.)
Reply 1. Creation does not denote the existence of one thing after another in connection with one subject.

Reply 2. In creation there is not a common subject of privation and form, but there is a transition.

Reply 2. The greater the distance between the terms, the greater the change, provided the subject is identical.

Reply 4. In order that there might be a change, one same thing must be otherwise than it was before.

Reply 5. That which proceeds from passive power is changed, but that which proceeds from active power is not.
Article III

Is Creation Something Real in the Creature, and if so, What Is It?

It would seem that creation is not anything real in creatures, for:
1. God's creative action is received into absolute non-being.
2. Creation is not in God nor in creatures.
3. Creation is neither substance nor accident.
4. Since the subject of creation is nothing, it is not an accident, whence it is not a substance.
5. Creation is not a relation since absolute being is not subject or equal to non-being.
6. Creation is not a relation for that implies continuous creation.
7. If creation were a relation, it would follow that creation is not received by the creative act.
8. As change is reduced to the genus which is its term, so creation terminates in substance yet is not of the genus of substance.\(^1\)

On the contrary, if creation is nothing real, nothing is really created which is false. For it is answered that creation is not the mean between creator and creature, but that the creature depends upon the creator who does not depend on it. Now this relation of creature to God is real, while only logical in God. Moreover, taken actively creation belongs to the genus of relation, not to that of passion since it is not an approach to that being nor a change.\(^2\) Thus creation is a relation of creature to creator together with a beginning of existence.

\(^1\) Cf. Supra, Objection 3, p. 6.
\(^2\) Cf. Supra, Article II, p. 140.
Reply 1. The recipient of the creative action is that which is created.  

Reply 2. As stated, creation passively signifies a real relation since it implies beginning. This relation is a kind of creature in the broad sense, but in the strict sense, it having being, it is con-created.

Reply 3. This relation is an accident inasmuch as it is subsequent to the thing created; it is prior to its subject inasmuch as it is an action.

Reply 4. Creation considered as implying a relation has as its subject the creature.

Reply 5. This relation in one of subjection between a being and its creator.

Reply 6. Creation is a relation between God and creature together with inception of existence, which relation ever remains, but this does not prove that a thing is being made continually.

Reply 7. Creative relation derives chiefly from subsistent being and differs from it as something concreated.

Reply 8. The comparison fails because in creation there is no process from potency to act.

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Article IV

Is the Creative Power or Act Communicable to a Creature?

Again the reply seems to be in the affirmative, for:

1. Lower creatures flow from their first principle through creation by the higher creatures.

2. Creation is not incompatible with creatures for they do not need infinite power to create.

3. A thing is as distant from one opposite as it shares in the nature of the other when both opposites are nature or also when one is a nature and the other is not.

4. As God makes power to be where there was no power, the more can He make a limited power as in a creature to have omnipotence to create.

5. Created nature cooperates in the creation of substantial forms by disposing matter for the forms.

6. Higher creatures are the means whereby God creates corporeal creatures since corporeal creatures are not like God specifically or generically.

7. Second intelligence does not receive its being from God except through the first intelligence.¹

8. An intelligence, not being a composite caused only by creation, causes an intelligence under it and as such creates it.²

¹ (Cf. De Causis, prop, xix.) The De Causis is an anonymous work having been ascribed to several authors; St. Thomas has judged it to be an Arabian compilation of a work by Proclus (A.D. 410-485), a member of the Athenian school of Neo-Platonism.

² (Cf. ibid., prop. viii.)
Reply 1. In the bringing of things into being nothing has yet existed.

Reply 2. Infinite being is infinity removed on both parts from absolute non-being, whereas finite being is infinitely removed on one part.

Reply 2. This objection is granted since it makes no difference to the question at issue.

Reply 4. Omnipotence that is made implies potentiality and is impossible.

Reply 5. Insofar as forms have matter in which to be created, nature can act dispositively, but this action cannot extend to the substance of what is created.

Reply 6. If creatures proceed from God through the instrumentality of some power, how can this first nature be created by God but not like Him?

Reply 7. This is stated in the De Causis, the author of which holds that lower creatures were created by the higher, wherefore its authority is not accepted.¹

Reply 8. Same as Reply 8.

¹. (Cf. De Causis, prop. x.)
9. The spiritual creature gives species and being to the corporeal creature.¹

10. God can give a creature the power to create which is no more than creation, which God can do.

11. As a creature can make a thing from its contrary, the more can it make something from non-being which offers less resistance.

On the contrary, since being and non-being are an infinite distance apart it requires an infinite power to operate at an infinite distance. Creation denotes an active power which brings things into being, which being's form is both the term of the action and also its end. Since the order of effects follows the order of causes, a second cause cannot by itself be the principle of being as such; thus only a first agent alone can create. Now creation, moreover, demands infinite energy in the power, which is shown thus: (a) the power of a maker is proportionate to the distance between the thing made and the thing from which it is made; (b) in the making of a thing the manner of making depends on the action of the maker; (c) only that agent whose action is its very substance requires no recipient matter; (d) all second causes derive their action from the first cause; (e) if there be a finite power productive of something without any presupposed potentiality, there must be some proportion between the power and the one that educes a thing from potentiality to act: this suggests the absurdity that there is proportion between some and no potentiality. Therefore, the conclusion that a creature cannot create instrumentally follows.

¹ (Cf. Augustine, De Immortalitate Animae, xvi.)
Reply 2. This refers to the soul which does not create but in-
forms a thing.

Reply 10. Power to create cannot include the bestowal of that
power upon a creature since it is utterly uncommunicable to a creature.

Reply 11. Since absolute non-being is further removed from act
than matter subject to any contrary whatsoever, it requires greater
power to produce a thing from nothing than from one contrary to an-
other.
Can There Be Anything That Is Not Created by God?

The reply to this question seems to be in the affirmative, for:

1. As there can be a thing understood by the intellect as being apart from the understanding that it is from God, the more can there be a real thing not from God.

2. Creation of a thing terminates in being and thus the quiddity of a thing is an addition to being.

3. Prime matter is not from God because the creative act can terminate only in an act, not in potentiality.

It is answered that by the notion of a universal cause of things early philosophers held that matter is uncaused and is the only cause of everything in the sensible world. Later philosophers posited certain active causes and said that matter existed before the action of any efficient cause. Finally, Plato, Aristotle and his disciples posited the universal cause of things from which all other causes came. This position may be thus clarified: (a) if in a number of things is found something common to all, it follows that this was the effect of a single cause; (b) whenever something is found to be in several things by participation in various degrees, it must be derived from these in which it exists perfectly by those containing it imperfectly; (c) whatsoever is through another is to be reduced to that which is of itself.

Reply 1. Being in creatures can be understood only as derived from divine being.

Reply 2. By ascribing being to quiddity, it is shown to be created.

Reply 2. Prime matter is not created per se, but with being.
Is There but One Principle of Creation?

It seems that there are more than one principle of creation, for:

1. Evil is not only an accidental effect of a good, but as such it can be traced to something per se.

2. Evil is either produced by a cause which is not a good, or it is a first principle.

3. If evil happens beside the intention of good, it is not made and is thus the principle of creation, for everything is created save the principle of creation.

4. Evil, which is vicious, cannot occur in God's effects beside His intention.

5. What occurs accidentally happens in the least cases; but evil, occurring in most cases, is thus not due to an accidental cause.

6. The cause of evil is defective, but an accidental cause is effective; whence good is not the accidental cause of evil.

7. Since evil is not a thing, it has neither a per se nor an accidental cause.

8. It seems that there is a principle of good and one of evil, for evil is in more ways than good, and just as good needs a creator, so also does evil.

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1. (Cf. Aristotle, Physica, ii, 5.)
2. (Cf. Aristotle, Topica, ii, 6.)
3. (Cf. Augustine, De Civitate Dei, xii, 7.)
4. (Cf. Augustine, Tract. 1, 13, in Joann.)
5. (Cf. Dionysius, De Divinis Nominibus, iv.)
Reply 1. This is true of an effect that is a cause per se; such is not evil.

Reply 2. As already stated, evil is a privation of being and thus it is not a per se effect, but an accidental one.

Reply 3. As evil, since it is privation of being, is not properly speaking, an effect, the more is it not a cause.

Reply 4. Evil occurs not due to ignorance or impotence in good, but owing to the order of divine wisdom and divine goodness.

Reply 5. Evil occurs in the minority of cases if effects are compared to their proper causes, as is evident from the process of nature.

Reply 6. An accidental cause is either that which causes an effect by not intending it, or that which is accidental to an active cause: an accidental effect could, in the first case, be the term of the cause's action but beside its intention, yet the per se effect of another cause; now evil cannot be the term of an action. In the second case, an accidental effect is accidental to an effect; in this sense evil can have an accidental cause.

Reply 7. Evil, being a privation, is a negation adhering in a subject; it can be an accidental cause in the sense stated above.

Reply 8. Good owes its perfection to the entire presence of all the things that make it perfect; a thing lacking any of these is imperfect and, consequently, evil; wherefore evil is less a being than good.
9. Further, evil, like good, is a genus and thus is being, therefore it needs a creator.

10. Evil is a nature because it belongs in the genus of good whose contrary it is. Thus there is an evil principle of creation.

11. Again evil is a nature since it gives good its specific difference.

12. As there is a supreme good which is the principle of all good things, so there must be something supremely bad that is the principle of all bad or evil things.

13. Evil as an effect does not come from God, for it does not bear witness to or resemble Him. Thus it comes from another principle.

14. Evil does not exist potentially or actually in God; thus it cannot be caused by God.

15. Evil, being privation, is the end of corruption as the form is the end of generation. As nature induces a form, so it intends privation, wherefore evil is produced by a per se cause.

16. Composite things must proceed from a principle other than God, since God, being simple, can only produce a simple effect.

17. Since corruptible things do not continue forever, they do not come from God, but from another principle.

18. God as an agent does not produce His like in incorruptible substances, for which reason they come from another principle.

19. As, on account of its goodness, nature makes what it best can, the more does God, by His all-surpassing goodness, make things as good as He can. Since spiritual things are better than corporeal things, the latter proceed not from God, but from another principle.

1. (Cf. Aristotle, Categoriae, 10.)
2. (Cf. Aristotle, De Caelo, ii, 5.)
Reply 9. The statement that good and evil are genera is partly true in the sense that good and evil are convertible with being and privation of being; but they are generically contrary in the sense that one is more perfect than the other.  

Reply 10. The evil contrary to being indicates also a habit to which privation is annexed, wherefore this habit is also evil.

Reply 11. Evil differentiates the vicious habit as the intention of an inconsistent and undue end of an action.

Reply 12. Evil is not intensified by approach to a term but by recession from a term.

Reply 13. This argument presupposes that evil has a per se cause.


Reply 15. Generation is natural in every way, whereas corruption is sometimes against nature if referred to a nature in particular.

Reply 16. God does not act by natural necessity, but of His own will; nor must an effect equal its cause either in simplicity or in universality.

Reply 17. God's works continue forever not in number or mode of being, but in species or genus and substance.

Reply 18. Bodies resemble God in respect of His nature insofar as they have being, goodness and some unity.

Reply 19. Nature always does what is best, not with regard to the part but with regard to the whole; thus it would not be better for the universe if all creatures were of one order.

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1. (Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, x, 4.)
The principle of evil is not distinct from that of good since it does not produce its effects in good things; also there is one principle of movement; thus there is only one principle of creation. It is answered that the ancients, by holding matter and contrariety as principles of nature, were guilty of a threefold fault regarding contraries: first, they considered only the specific diversity of contraries and disregarded the fact that they are in the same genus; secondly, they judged both contraries equally, e.g., good and evil are distinct natures; thirdly, they considered things in themselves or in mutual relationship with individual things and not in relation to the order of the universe, e.g., corruptible things in comparison with the incorruptible are from an evil principle. Now it is proved thus that this error is impossible:

a) There is some one thing in common to all contraries and things differing from one another—being, at least; thus there must be one principle which is the cause of their being; this principle or first cause must be a first mover who is not himself moved.

b) Forasmuch as a thing is in act it is good, has being and perfection wherein good exists; but insofar as a thing lacks act, it is evil and has a privation of being; wherefore everything acts inasmuch as it is good; now every agent, acting forasmuch as it is in act, produces what is in act, which is therefore a good. Thus the good is the only creative principle.

c) Since diverse things clearly came together into one order, they must have a coordinator to bring them together; thus there is a ruler over all, as Aristotle concludes.\(^1\)

\(^1\) (Cf. Aristotle, *Physica*, viii, 6.)
\(^2\) (Cf. *Metaphysics*, xiii, 10.)
Article VII

Does God Work in Operations of Nature?

The reply to this question seems to be in the negative, for:

1. The action of nature requires only an active force in the agent and passivity in the recipient.

2. As the heavenly body does not operate in every action of an elemental body, so also God does not operate in every natural operation.

3. God's operation and nature's operation are not the same, unity of operation meaning unity of nature; nor are the operations distinct since they do not terminate in the same product.

4. Nor can these two operations have the same term by subordinating one to the other since both God and nature produce a natural effect immediately.

5. God, in fashioning a nature, gives it everything essential to that nature, e.g., by power He enables them to perform their natural operations.

6. That the operation whereby God produces or preserves the forces of nature has its effects on these forces does not prove that God works in natural operations.

7. If natural forces were not sufficient for nature to act, God would have to continue to do more indefinitely, which is impossible because an effect cannot depend on an infinite number of actions.

8. The action of a cause acting of natural necessity follows because nature is confined to one effect.

9. God's action and nature's, being altogether disparate, cannot be separated from one another, wherefore God need not operate in nature.
Reply 1. The power of the first cause takes first place in the production of the effect and is thus necessary for the production of being which is the first effect.

Reply 2. This comparison does not apply in every respect.

Reply 3. In God's operation of moving nature, nature does not operate except as the instrument of the divine operation.

Reply 4. God and nature operate immediately, but there is order of priority and posteriority between them.

Reply 5. A lower power is the principle of operation as an instrument of a higher power apart from which it has no operation.

Reply 6. God is the cause of nature's operation in yet other ways, as will be stated below.

Reply 7. A natural thing can be given its own proper power as a permanent form, but not the power to act so as to cause being like a first cause; nor could it be given a natural power to cause its own movement or to preserve its being.

Reply 8. The natural necessity whereby an agent acts results from the order of all preceding causes including the first cause.

Reply 9. The will of God, the origin of all natural movement, precedes the operation of nature so that its operation is presupposed in every operation of nature.

1. (Cf. De Causis, prop ix.)
10. A creature is sufficiently equipped for action without God's operation since it is like God inasmuch as it exists and acts.

11. God does not operate in voluntary activity since the will is master of its own action.

12. Further, since the will is free, it can act without the operation of another cause in it.

13. It would be ascribing to God the defects in voluntary and natural actions if God operated in will and nature as a first cause.

14. Given a cause whose action suffices, it is superfluous to require the action of another cause.

On the contrary, nature presupposes God, and the action of nature depends on the action of God. Moreover, nature cannot exist except through God's action, nor would it continue to be if God did not keep it in being. Again, God's power is in every natural thing since He is in all things by His essence, presence, and power. It is answered that God operates in the operations of nature and will. He works in all natural things, not as if the thing were inert, but because God works in nature and will when they work. This is thus explained:

A thing may be the cause of another's action, first, by giving to it the power to act; secondly, by preserving a power; thirdly, by moving it to act; fourthly, as a principle agent causing the action of its instrument. Thus God is the cause of every action inasmuch as every agent is an instrument of the divine power operating. He causes everything's action inasmuch as He gives everything the power to act, preserves it in being, applies it to action, and inasmuch as He causes other powers to act by His own power. And since God is His own power and since He is in things
Reply 10. The likeness of a creature to God is imperfect and as such needs the perfect.

Reply 11. The first cause does not act in the will so as to determine it of necessity to one thing; this is thus left to reason and to will.

Reply 12. God does not cause the operation of the will to the exclusion of liberty.

Reply 13. The perfections in the effect must be ascribed to the first cause and the imperfections to the second cause because of the former's precedence over the latter.

Reply 14. God can produce the natural effect without nature, but He chooses to act by means of nature to preserve the order of things.
Article VIII

Does God Work in Nature by Creating?

It seems that creation is mingled in with the works of nature, for:

1. Since forms have no constituent matter and yet are made, they are not made out of matter and thus created.

2. As the rational soul is a form in matter as subject and is created, so other natural forms in matter must be created.

3. Natural forms are not educed from matter since they are not in matter before generation.

4. Anaxagoras held that forms are latent in matter; but Aristotle disproves this.¹

5. If the form is in any way in matter before generation, it would be there as some part of itself; if it is not there at all, it does not pre-exist; hence it is not simple.

6. Since the completion of the form is subsequent to generations, the completion does not pre-exist in matter and is thus created.

7. If this completion was first in one way and then in another, it is merely altered, wherefore nature's operation of actualizing potential forms is merely one of alteration.

8. A substantial form cannot be produced by an accident and thus not by a lower agent, wherefore it is created.

9. Since putrid matter itself cannot cause animated beings, the living animated beings engendered from it must be created by the first being.

10. For natural things to be informed, they must be informed by a first being, viz., God.

¹ (Cf. Aristotle, Physica, i, 4.)
Reply 1. The form cannot properly speaking be made like a self-subsisting being.

Reply 2. The rational soul is a subsistent being and is not reduced from the potentiality of matter.

Reply 3. The form was in matter before generation, not actually, but potentially.

Reply 4. Anaxagoras is in agreement with Reply 3.

Reply 5. The form pre-exists in matter imperfectly, i.e., it is wholly there in potentiality and is afterwards educed wholly into actuality.

Reply 6. This reply follows from reply 5, since the form is not perfected by adding to matter what was already potentially in matter.

Reply 7. Actuality and potentiality are substantial modes of being, but alteration is made by accidental modes of being.

Reply 8. An accidental form acts by virtue of the substantial form whose instrument it is.

Reply 9. Such animated living beings are less perfect and are produced from putrid matter as the instrument of the power of a heavenly body.*

Reply 10. The prototype form, God, does not exclude derivation of forms from lower forms whose action terminates in like forms.

*With regard to the then generally accepted theory of spontaneous generation, it must be noted that St. Thomas introduced a qualification and sees the need of a special secondary cause to produce even the lower forms of life.
11. Since Nature only produces its like, those things which are unlike to the generator must be created.

12. Forms in matter are produced by forms without matter which are in turn only ideas in the divine mind and must thus be created.

13. Since forms in nature are principles of being, they must be created just as being is created.

14. Natural forms, subsisting in matter, must be caused by self-subsistent forms and thus created by an extrinsic agent.

On the contrary, the work of nature is one of government and propagation, and as such is distinct from creation. Further, if forms create, nature's work is purposeless. So also if substantial forms are created; in that case accidental forms would not dispose in any way the thing generated. Nor do the actions of diverse agents terminate in one same effect.

It is answered that some, as Anaxagoras, held that a thing is made by drawing it out of another where it was latent. Others, as Plato and Avicenna, held that nature disposes the already existing matter to the form. Now a generated thing has being and subsists in that being; but a form does not subsist, but is something by which a thing is made. Consequently, nature makes a composite from matter which is potentially a composite. Hence, the form is educed from the potentiality of matter by an agent who is also a composite.
Reply 11. Such an unlike being is like to the generator in proxigenus, and is, so to speak, a mean species engendered from different species.

Reply 12. As in Reply 10, forms in matter derive from forms without matter as from prototypes.

Reply 13. Being is created insofar as every secondary cause acts by the power of the first creating cause.

Reply 14. A natural form in matter is produced from a self-subsistent form, as has been already stated above.
Article IX
Is the Rational Soul Brought into Being by Creation or Is It Transmitted through the Semen?

It seems that the soul is transmitted through the semen, for:
1. A begetter, begetting a man, produces the form, i.e., the rational soul, of the begotten; therefore the soul is generated.
2. Again, the rational soul is caused by the begetter since the efficient cause produces his own species in its effect.¹
3. As bodies derive from bodies, so do souls derive from souls, as is evident from the fact that children are like their parents in body and soul.
4. Since the embryo is alive, it has the soul transmitted with it in the semen.
5. If there was before the rational soul another soul in the semen, there would have been an animal different from man which could not pass to the species of man.
6. If the soul's formative power is in the semen, its substance is there also.
7. The embryo lives and has characteristic vital functions before it is a man; consequently, it must have a soul and is a human being.

¹ (Cf. Aristotle, Physica, ii, 7.)
Reply 1. The rational soul is not the immediate active principle in human generation; the generative force and the active principle of the semen dispose the body as instruments of the soul.

Reply 2. The generator causes the union of the rational soul with matter merely by disposing the matter to the form.

Reply 3. That the children are like their parents in body and even in soul follows from the fact that the forms are diversified according to the diversity of matter, but these are accidental differences.

Reply 4. There are several opinions about the life of the embryo which are easily discredited and disproven. Suffice it to say that there is in the semen a soul-power, based on a corporeal spirit, which disposes matter for the rational soul. The generation of an animal (man) is a series of generations and corruptions: the form of the semen is replaced by another substantial form, which is in turn replaced by a vegetal soul, which is replaced by a soul both vegetal and sensitive; this is now replaced by a soul that is vegetal, sensitive, and rational. This must be done by the Creator.

Reply 5. Before the rational soul, the embryo is not yet perfect and is thus not in a genus or species save by reduction.

Reply 6. There is in the soul the soul force which comes from the soul of the generator.

Reply 7. Before the advent of the rational soul, the semen is a living and animate being; thus this argument is granted.
8. Since the formative power is a disposition to the soul and conduces to the infusion of the soul, it remains after the advent of the rational soul and is thus superfluous; but this seems to be unreasonable.

9. If the soul is not generated, neither is the man.

10. If the body is begotten and the soul is from another source, there will be a twofold being in man; one is corporeal, the other animate.

11. Matter and form must be terms of action of one agent; thus, since generation terminates in the body, it terminates in the soul also.

12. Since the action of the soul is not performed independently of the body, the soul is transmitted through the body; this is shown by the fact that man cannot understand without images, nor apply acquired knowledge after injury to an organ of imagination.

13. Since the rational soul is more perfect than material forms which produce their like, the more can it produce another rational soul.

14. Since generation is both in God and in nature, the soul is generated, it being situated between God and nature.

15. In generation the female provides the body and the male the soul; thus the soul is procreated.\(^1\)

On the contrary, it is answered that the rational soul is not transmitted through the semen, and this for the following reasons:

a) The rational soul subsists in its own being and can thus exist apart from the body. Moreover, since the soul does not have matter, or at least none that is subject to contrariety, it must be created and not generated by the body.

b) Since the rational soul is a spiritual form, not dependent upon

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1. (Cf. Aristotle, *De Generatione Animalium*, ii, 1.)
Reply 3. This formative force, which first served to form the body, remains after the advent of the rational soul to regulate the body.

Reply 2. Though the soul itself is not generated, its union with the body is in a manner from the generator; hence man is begotten.

Reply 10. There is not a twofold being in man because the Creator gives being to the soul in the body, while the begetter disposes the body to participate in this being.

Reply 11. Two co-ordinate agents, one of which is the instrument of the other, can combine so that the action of one terminates in form and the action of the other in matter; now nature is the instrument of divine power.

Reply 12. An intelligence in a body needs nothing as a co-principle of intellectual action; it needs a body objectively on which to base its images, to form ideas, and upon which to refer the intelligences in application of the acquired knowledge.

Reply 13. Owing to its perfection, the rational soul can be produced only by creation.

Reply 14. The generation in God is not imperfected by change and division; thus the rational soul, being indivisible and unchangeable, is not generated.

Reply 15. This refers to the sensitive soul.

the body, it cannot be produced by the seed or through procreation.

c) Since the rational soul is independent of matter, it cannot be educed from the potentiality of matter; thus it is not generated.1

2. *(Cf. Aristotle, op. cit., 4.)*
Is the Rational Soul Created in the Body?

It seems that the soul is created apart from the body for:

1. The universe is imperfect through lacking its most excellent parts if the rational souls were not all created from the beginning.

2. Wherefore it follows that the world would be destroyed at the height of its perfection, i.e., after all souls and bodies have been produced; but this is absurd.

3. If rational souls were all lacking at the beginning, the universe was imperfect as though some of its species had been wanting.

4. Macrobius held that souls come down to earth through one of two gates, implying that souls are created in heaven.

5. As the efficient cause of the body, the soul precedes the body in point of time.

6. Since the soul has irascible and concupiscible appetite before its union with the body, it is not created in the body.

7. The soul, being a more subtle substance than the body, seems to be created above all bodies.

8. Since the ultimate perfection of the soul and the place befitting its nature is its heavenly home, it seems to be created there.

9. Since the work of creation precedes that of increase, all souls must have been created at the beginning.

1. (Cf. Super Somnium Scipionis, i.) Ambrosius Theodotus Macrobius (c. 375-450), doubtfully a Christian, was a Roman philosopher and grammarian who adhered in part to Platonic teachings.

2. (Cf. Aristotle, De Anima, ii, h.)

3. (De Spiritu et Anima, xiii.)
Reply 1. The universe in its beginning was perfect as regards nature's causes, but rational souls are not evolved by natural causes.

Reply 2. Merely movement, not the substance of the world, will cease.

Reply 3. The multitude of souls belongs to the ultimate, not to the initial essential perfection of the universe.

Reply 4. The Platonists held that the soul is united to the body accidentally and that the soul, after leaving the body, is subsequently united to the body.

Reply 5. Aristotle explains that the soul is the efficient cause whence bodily movement originates.

Reply 6. The authority quoted refers to a priority of nature, not of time, because the body derives this appetite from the soul.

Reply 7. The soul is the form and perfection of the body and together with this body it must needs be created.

Reply 8. The soul's union with the body is its initial perfection, wherefore it must be created in the place occupied by the body.

Reply 9. Precedence of creation over increase is true as regards natural principles, but creation of souls is not a work of this kind.

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1. (Cf. Loc. cit.)
10. Souls seem to have been created before bodies since there seems to be an inequality of merits in souls, as in accordance to those bodies well adapted to the soul’s actions and those ill-adapted to them.

11. The soul, being independent of the body as to its being, does not begin to exist together with the body, for things united in their beginning would seem to depend on each other as to their being.

It is answered once more that the opinions held by some that souls were all created together apart from their bodies are erroneous, for:

1. The soul apart from the body has not the perfection of its nature, because by itself it is not the complete species of a nature, but a part of human nature. Hence the soul was not created before its body.

2. Since the soul is neither a composite of matter and form nor just matter, souls could only be differentiated as species; unless these souls are united with their bodies from the beginning, they cannot be distinguished individually because there would be no principle of individuation.

3. The rational soul is not distinct in substance from the sensible and vegetal soul; as the vegetal and sensible soul cannot originate apart from the body, so also cannot the rational soul be created apart from the body.

4. If the rational soul were created apart from the body, and in that state were possessed of the perfection of its natural being, no reasonable causes can be assigned for its union with the body.
Reply 10. This diversity does not arise from a diversity of merits in souls, but from a diversity of dispositions in bodies.

Reply 11. The soul does not depend on the body for its end, because it exists in the body as a subsistent being remaining after the body's death, though not in the perfection received from its union with the body.
Article XI

Is the Sensible and Vegetal Soul Created or is it Transmitted through the Semen?

It seems that the sensible and vegetal soul is created, for:

1. The sensible and vegetal soul in man is created and is of the same species as that of plants and dumb animals; hence the sensitive and vegetal souls of plants and dumb animals are also created.

2. If the sensible and vegetal souls, which are dispositions in man and perfections in plants and animals, are created in man, they are a fortiori created in plants and animals.

3. Since the sensible and vegetal souls are substantial forms in plants and animals, they are not accidental dispositions in man.

4. Since the sensible and vegetal souls are not in the semen, they are not generated, but created.

5. Nor can the force in the semen act by virtue of or as an instrument of the soul of the generator, since it is not in contact with the sensible soul of the generator.

6. The force in the semen cannot move anything after it is separated from the generator, who is its commander and mover.

7. The force in the semen, not having the perfection of the sensible soul, cannot produce a soul like to its species, an action belonging to the sensible soul.

8. A soul cannot be brought into being by a natural agent, for nothing acts outside its own species.

Reply 1. The sensible soul in man and that in dumb animals are of the same genus, not of the same species; nor do things generically the same come into being in the same manner necessarily.

Reply 2. As one form differs from another, so does the rational soul of man differ from the sensible and vegetal soul of plants and animals, but in plants only vegetal forces flow from the essence of the soul; in animals, vegetal and sensitive powers, and in man, all these plus intellectual powers.

Reply 3. The sensitive faculty in both man and dumb animals flows from their substantial form, but in both the power is an accident.

Reply 4. The sensible soul is present in the semen as an active force.

Reply 5. The semen is moved by the soul of the begetter as long as it retains the force communicated by that soul.

Reply 6. The semen is not moved by the begetter's soul except through a transfusion of a kind of energy remaining in the semen.

Reply 7. The sensible and vegetal souls are evolved from the potentiality of matter, a power which the force in the semen has.

Reply 8. As heat acts as the instrument of the form of fire, so can a natural agent act as an instrument of a sensible soul.
9. Since a natural agent acts only by transmuting matter, he can produce a soul like to his species, an action belonging to the sensible soul.

10. Sensible and vegetal souls have a quiddity which does not exist before being brought into being; hence it must be created.

11. As the souls of animals engendered from corrupt matter, the more must the souls of animals be created, since such animals rank higher than those from corrupt matter.

12. Nor can the soul of animals engendered from corrupt matter be produced by a heavenly body since a living substance surpasses all inanimate substances.¹

13. The power of an intellectual substance will not be in an inanimate heavenly body as a vital force that can be the principle of life.

14. If a heavenly body can give life by virtue of an intellectual substance, it can likewise give intelligence, thus begetting a rational soul.

15. Since the sensible soul is produced by neither the body nor by the soul, it is not produced by the begetter but by the Creator.

16. Since the sensible soul is a cognitive, it cannot be produced by the action of mixed elements, or nature.

17. The sensible soul, since it is subsistent because it causes movement of animals and since it is not composed of matter and form, must be created.

18. The sensible soul is mover of the body, which cannot cause movement, because in that which moves itself there must be a part mover and a part moved;² thus it is subsistent and created.

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¹ (Cf. Augustine, De Vera Religione, lv.)
² (Cf. Aristotle, Physica, viii, 5.)
Reply 2. Matter is transmitted by both an accidental and a substantial change; thus can a natural agent cause also a substantial form.

Reply 10. Since the sensible soul is not subsistent, it is not a quiddity, but part of a quiddity.

Reply 11. The power of a heavenly body is sufficient for the production of animals engendered from corrupt matter, and this power remains in such animals insofar as they are transmitted by it as by the first cause of alteration.

Reply 12. The heavenly body, nevertheless, acts by virtue of the living substance who moves it.

Reply 13. The power of a heavenly body remains in the heavenly body after the manner of an intention.

Reply 14. As already stated, the rational soul can not be produced by no body even instrumentally.

Reply 15. The sensible soul is produced by the formative energy in the semen from the soul of the begetter.

Reply 16. Elements cannot produce a cognitive power except instrumentally.

Reply 17. One cannot conclude from this that a sensible soul is subsistent, since it causes movement by appetite which is seated in the composite of soul and body.

Reply 18. A body can cause a movement without being itself moved by the same kind of movement as that which it causes.
19. There is in animals a power executing movement whose function cannot be shared by both body and soul; hence, the soul must act by itself, is subsistent, and created.

Reply 19. This power does not of itself cause movement, but is a disposition of a movable thing to be moved.

On the contrary, it is answered that the beings of the sensible and vegetal souls consist only in union with the body, since their functions cannot be exercised without a bodily organ. Thus they are brought into being with the body by the natural generator. Further, these souls do not transcend the order of natural causes since the order of their actions follows the order of their nature. The rational soul alone transcends the order of natural principles.
Article XII

Is the Sensible or Vegetal Soul in the Semen from the Beginning of the Latter's Separation?

The reply to this question seems to be in the negative, for:

1. If the soul was not in the semen from the beginning it must be created after the body.

2. If the sensitive, like the rational, soul was not in the semen from the beginning it must be created after the body.

3. The force in the semen is of the same species as the sensible soul whence it derives, just as the son is of the species of the father.

4. The species of the sensible soul produced through the semen is in the seminal force.

5. Since the soul is in the sundered part of an animal, it is all the more in the sundered semen.

6. Since the male provides the soul, the soul is in the semen.

7. Since certain diseases which are accidents are transmitted from parents to children, the subject which must have a soul is transmitted also.

8. It is absurd to say that an inanimate or soul-less body will be transformed and become animate; thus the soul is in the semen from the beginning.

On the contrary, the semen and fruit are actually inanimate but potentially animate. Moreover, the soul of the generator is neither entirely transmitted into the semen, nor is it transmitted into the semen, nor is it transmitted in part. Hence the semen is not in the soul from the beginning.

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1. (Cf. Aristotle, De Anima, ii, 1.)
Reply 1. Before the advent of the soul, the body of a being, e.g., lion, plant, etc., is not animate, but is merely the seed of a body.

Reply 2. The rational soul is not evolved from the energy in the seed, nor are any souls in the seed from the beginning.

Reply 3. This force is like a son with regard to the acquisition of some particular complement that is lacking.

Reply 4. This force is like an art in that as the thing made pre­exists in the craftsman's art as an active force, so a living being pre­exists in the formative energy.

Reply 5. When an animal of this kind is dissected, the soul, actually one and potentially many, remains in either part; now since the semen is not actually a part, it does not follow that the soul remains in the semen after its separation.

Reply 6. The male provides the soul inasmuch as the semen contains the soul force.

Reply 7. Such diseases are transmitted only because their germs are in the semen, thus causing a certain indisposition.

Reply 8. The semen is simply inanimate though virtually animate.
Article XIII

Can That Which Proceeds from Another Be Eternal?

It seems that what is from another is not eternal, for:

1. Nothing that always is needs something that it may be.
2. Something from another receives its being from whence it is.
3. What is from another is generated, made, or brought into being and, as such, must at some time not have been.
4. Whatever has being from another, considered in itself is not and must at some time not have been.
5. Whatever is from another is the effect of that from which it is and must be posterior to it.

Reply 1. If need denotes a lack of some thing needed, that which is always needs nothing else to exist; if it denotes the order of the origin whence a thing is, that which is always can need something else to exist.

Reply 2. If the recipient received something from eternity, he had it from eternity.

Reply 3. Where there is no distinction between being generated and having being generated, it does not follow that the thing generated is from another.

Reply 4. If what has its being from another be the same being that it receives from another, it cannot be nothing in itself. Otherwise the reverse is true.

Reply 5. Every cause must precede its effect by priority of nature, not in point of duration.
Article XIV

Is It Possible for That Which Differs from God Essentially to Have Always Existed?

It seems possible for that which is essentially different from God to have always existed, for:

1. God, Who causes the whole substance of a thing, can produce a co-eternal effect.

2. Nor would a creature be equalled to God in point of duration if created from eternity since its duration would not have been wholly simultaneous.¹

3. God can produce a creature from eternity inasmuch as He is unchangeable from eternity.

4. Although God works by His will, the possibility of His having created from eternity is not removed.

5. If God produced a creature at a certain instant, and if His power did not increase, He could have produced a creature before that instant, and before that, and so on indefinitely.

6. God can do more than the human intellect can understand; the Platonists understood God to have made something that always existed, as Augustine says.²

7. It is not inconsistent with the notion of a creature to have been made: thus the world always existed as not made by God, or it always existed, yet was made by God.

8. God as a voluntary agent can produce a creature from eternity.

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¹ (Cf. Boethius, De Consolatione Philosophiae, v.)
² (Cf. De Civitate Dei, x, 31.)
Reply 1. Here is considered the power of the maker, but not the thing made which did once not exist.

Reply 2. If creatures were eternal they would not equal God except as they imitate Him.

Reply 3. Here is considered the power of the maker which is not diminished except by the divine will choosing not to create from eternity.

Reply 4. Same as Reply number 3.

Reply 5. In reference to His power, God could have made the world sooner than He did; in reference to the creature, the world could not have been made before it was made since there was then no movement or real time.

Reply 6. The Platonists did understand this, but that does not prove it.

Reply 7. This argument really considers that which is possible absolutely.

Reply 8. Here is considered possibility in reference to an active power.
1. On the contrary, "That which is brought into being from nothingness is by its very nature incapable of being co-eternal with one who has no beginning and is eternal."¹

2. A creature cannot be eternal, since it is unchangeable.

3. That which is made depends upon another and is not necessary; therefore, it is not eternal.

4. If God could make a creature from eternity, He did; in eternal things there is no difference between what can be and what is;² (It has been refuted that creatures are eternal, wherefore it must not be said that they could be eternal.)

5. To say that creatures are made from something is false; to say that they are made from nothing implies that they have not always been.

6. It belongs to the eternal not to have a beginning, whereas it belongs to a creature to have a beginning.

7. A creature is measured either by time or evernity which differ from eternity.

8. A creature did not exist before the instant of its creation.

It is answered that a thing is possible either in reference to power, active and passive, or in reference to no power. In reference to an active power, God does not lack the power to produce from eternity an essence distinct from Himself. Moreover, a thing is absolutely possible if it does not contain a contradiction of terms; thus the statement "something substantially distinct from God has always existed" does not contain a contradiction of terms except when there is movement involved.

¹ (Damascene, De Fide Orthodoxis, i.)
² (Cf. Aristotle, Physica, iii, 4.)
Lest these arguments seem to conclude that it is impossible from every point of view, they are answered as follows:

Reply 1. Damascene presupposes the Catholic faith.

Reply 2. Changeableness excludes eternity, but not indefinite duration.

Reply 3. This is true, but if that whence a thing proceeds has always existed, so also has the thing proceeding.

Reply 4. Merely because God can do a thing does not mean that He does it; further, Aristotle refers to passive power, which is repugnant to eternity, and to active power, the effect of which does not have to be in existence.

Reply 5. The statement "made from nothing" may mean "not made from something", so that either the preposition does not imply order to nothing, or order to nothing is affirmed, and the preposition includes the negation; but it still does not follow that the creature was at some time non-existent.

Reply 6. Eternity must have no beginning of duration, while a creature must have a beginning of origin, but not of duration.

Reply 7. Eternity and time differ from eternity in point of duration and in point of succession, for eternity has no succession and succession is not annexed to it.

Reply 8. Since God continues to give being, it does not follow that an instant of creation has to be assigned to creatures.

1. (Cf. Augustine, De Genesi ad Litteram, iv, 12; viii, 12.)
Article XV

Did Things Proceed from God of Natural Necessity or by the Decree of His Will?

It seems that things proceed from God of natural necessity, for:

1. As the sun, not by reason but by pre-election, enlightens things, so God produces creatures by communicating His goodness to them of natural necessity.¹

2. Perfection of lower nature derives from perfection of divine nature; since the perfection of a lower nature produces its like in some effect, God a fortiori communicates His goodness naturally.

3. Creatures are like to God as regards things of His nature, i.e., being, goodness, unity, etc., and not as regards things willed or understood.

4. Nor can the likeness of the divine attributes be communicated to creatures by divine will since power of nature is not subject to will.

5. Goodness, which is of God's nature, seems to be the cause for the production of creatures.²

6. God's nature and will being the same, He produces a thing willingly and naturally.

7. As natural necessity results from the unchangeableness of nature's actions, the more does God in His unchangeableness act of natural necessity.

8. God's operation is natural to Him because His operation is in His essence.

9. Since God is infinite, He has no end to choose, and consequently He acts of natural necessity.

¹ (Cf. Dionysius, De Divinis Nominibus, iv.)
² (Cf. Augustine, De Doctrinis Christianis, i, 32.)
Reply 1. This comparison of Dionysius refers to the universality of diffusion, but it does not apply to the absence of will.

Reply 2. The Divine Nature, in its perfection, communicates Its likeness to creatures, though not of natural necessity, but voluntarily.

Reply 3. Same as Reply 2.

Reply 4. Nature not being subject to will from within, it is not unreasonable to say that creatures are made by the Divine Nature in accordance with Divine Will.

Reply 5. The goodness of God as the object of His will and love is the cause of things through His will.

Reply 6. God's will and nature differ logically in the sense that nature denotes a respect to some one thing and will does not.

Reply 7. Natural necessity in nature results from both the unchangeableness of its nature and from its being determined to one thing, which is not the case in Divine Will.

Reply 8. The created effect follows the operation of God's nature which is considered as the principle of His will.

Reply 9. Despite His infinity, God is the end of all things, His infinity being a negative one, not one of quantity.
10. God is the necessary good and operates inasmuch as He is good.

11. In God there is nothing potential or contingent, nor is there anything necessary in Him either by coercion, or by supposition; all is in Him absolutely, wherefore it seems that He produces things necessarily.

12. The ultimate end of the divine will is the communication of the divine goodness to creatures, which God wills of necessity.

13. As God is good by His essence, so is He necessary by His essence, since as there is only good in Him so there is only the necessary in Him.

14. Since God's will is determined to one thing, namely the good, He produces creatures of necessity.

15. Since the relation of God's operation to Himself is natural because His operation is His essence, the relation of God to His effect is also natural.

16. By that which is essentially necessary, nothing is made except what is necessary and necessarily made; now God is essentially necessary.

17. The first agent acts by His essence, which is also His nature; therefore He acts naturally and produces beings naturally.

On the contrary, it is answered that God brought creatures into being by decree of His will, not by natural necessity, which is proven thus:

a) Since things do not happen just by chance, the universe must be directed to an end by a competent voluntary agent. This agent proposes an end to Himself and directs and moves nature toward that end. Now this first director, God, must direct by His will and thus bring creatures into existence by His will, not by natural necessity.

b) Nature must tend to produce its likeness that is determinately in one subject, since equality, caused by unity, exists in things in one way and inequality, caused by multitude, exists in many degrees. Con-
Reply 10. God's goodness works through His will in so far as it is the object or end of His will, but the will is not of necessity inclined to the means.

Reply 11. Regarding creatures, certain things can be called potential in respect to an active power not limited to one effect, not in regard to a passive potentiality.

Reply 12. The last end is not the communication of divine goodness but that goodness itself; thus God works for His goodness' sake, not from desire of the end, but from love of it.

Reply 13. This is true, but it does not therefore follow that everything proceeds from God of necessity.

Reply 14. Although God's will inclines naturally to His goodness and can only will the good, He is not determined to this or that good; therefore, it does not follow that things proceed necessarily from Him.

Reply 15. An effect follows from an action according to the mode of the principle of the action; now the divine will, the principle of divine action, has no necessary connection with creatures; consequently, it does not follow that creatures are created of natural necessity.

Reply 16. Creatures are not like God as to the manner of participation: all beings do not derive supreme goodness from the sovereign good, nor from the necessary being do all things proceed of necessity.

Reply 17. Since God's will is His essence, His working by His will does not prevent His working by His essence.
sequently, since there are many degrees of inequality among creatures, they cannot proceed from God naturally, but voluntarily. Wherefore it further follows that, granting His infinite power, God voluntarily creates this creature in this particular degree.

c) Before creatures were made they existed in God intelligibly, forasmuch as an effect must first pre-exist in its cause; now God being intelligence, whatever proceeds from Him must proceed by means of will which is the executor of the intellect.

d) Action is either that which remains in the agent or that which issues from the agent into an external recipient. Since God's action is His essence, it belongs only to the former kind of action, i.e., to understand, to will, etc.; wherefore, whatever God does outside Himself, He does understandingly and willingly.
Article XVI

Can a Multitude of Things Proceed from One First Thing?

Seemingly the reply to this question is in the negative, for:

1. Inasmuch as God is essentially and supremely one, only one thing can proceed from Him.

2. The one is convertible with being, and a being is like God in that it has being; hence, a being is like God in unity.

3. One and many oppose each other by way of privation; since there is no privation in God, multitude cannot proceed from Him.

4. Since God is the most universal cause, His most universal effect is being; but diversity and distinction are secondary causes of multitude from which each particular condition of being is derived.

5. Since one cannot be proper to many, it cannot be the cause of many.

6. There cannot be multitude or even composition in a creature since it is the effect of a one and simple God.

7. Many immediate effects cannot proceed from one same cause inasmuch as an effect is appropriate to its cause.

8. Since the unity of God is not a unity of order, it does make it possible that many things are made by the one God.

9. One simple thing has one action and produces one effect.

1. (Cf. Aristotle, Metaphysica, x, 3.)
Reply 1. The "oneness" proceeding from God refers both to each thing as one in itself and to all things together as a one perfect being.

Reply 2. Again, the creature is like God in unity inasmuch as each is one and all are one by unity of order.

Reply 2. The unity that is the principle of number, adding to being the idea of measure, is the kind of unity that multitude excludes, since number results from the division of continuity; thus multitude, resulting from being, is caused by God.

Reply 4. Being is not a genus since nothing extraneous can be added to being; therefore the cause of being-as-such must be the cause of all kinds of being and of the multitudes of being.

Reply 5. Since God is the proper cause of each creature inasmuch as He understands and wills it to be, the statement that one cannot be proper to many applies to appropriateness of equality, not here.

Reply 6. The likeness between God and creatures is not one of equality; hence, the same unity is not in creatures as is in God.

Reply 7. Since a cause can surpass its effect, several effects can proceed from one cause, although one effect cannot proceed immediately from several causes.

Reply 8. Though creatures imitate God's unity, their unity is not like God's.

Reply 9. God's simple action does not imply only one effect, since effects proceed from God according to the order of His wisdom and will.
10. One exemplar has only one proper exemplate.

11. Only one creature can proceed from the one form in the divine intellect.

12. Several respects to several creatures cannot be in the intellect since the divine intellect is supremely simple; nor are they in our intellect since God does not create by means of our reason.

13. God Who is the best of all things can produce only the best one.

14. Since God did not bestow unequal gifts upon His creatures when He first created them, He did not first produce multitude which arises from the equality or inequality of gifts bestowed.

15. God is not the cause of multitude since whatever He makes is one thing.

16. Since God, understanding nothing outside Himself, causes things by His intellect, He causes but one thing.

17. The creature produced from the creative essence pre-existing in God must be one as the creative essence is one.

18. God, by ordaining a creature to an end, makes it as close to the end as possible; now this can be done only in one way.

On the contrary, God can by the beginning of many creatures as a point can be the beginning of many lines. Again, since it is proper to unity to be the principle of multitude, it is appropriate to the one God to cause multitude. Moreover, God in His wisdom sets things in order whence multitude follows.

It is answered that the multitude and diversity of creatures proceeded from one principle, not because of a necessity imposed by matter, nor because of any limitation of power, nor on account of the end of intention; but the necessity of God's action arises from the form as the
Reply 10. Since creatures do not represent God perfectly, they imitate Him in various ways and are thus many exemplars.

Reply 11. The form in the divine intellect is logically manifest inasmuch as it represents creatures in many ways.

Reply 12. God does not understand by many ideas but by only one which He understands in many ways.

Reply 13. The universe is the best possible in terms of things actually existing, but not in terms of the things God can create.

Reply 14. What is given out of pure liberality may be given out of pure liberality as the giver wills and as His wisdom dictates.

Reply 15. Again, the unity in anything that God makes does not exclude all kinds of multitude.

Reply 16. God understanding nothing outside Himself means that those things outside of God are seen by Him not outside, but in Him.

Reply 17. Although creatures existing in God as in their effective cause or as a thing known in a knower are the divine essence, there is not in God one creature only for the reason that the divine essence is an adequate median for knowing different creatures, and a sufficient power for their production.

Reply 18. This is true when that which is done for an end can gain the end entirely and perfectly by equality, which is not the case here.
end of operation. For since God wished to make the universe such as it
it, He produced a diversity and multitude of creatures whence such and
such a form of the universe would arise. Thus multitude and diversity
of things proceeded from the order of wisdom, consequently, in such a
manner that the perfection of the universe might be realized in the
diversity of creatures.
Article XVII

Has the World Always Existed?

It seems that the world has always existed, for:

1. Divine goodness always was and communicates itself to creatures by creation; thus creatures are always brought into being by it.

2. Since the heavens are incorruptible and so seem always to have been, it seems that the world must always have been.

3. If God did not preserve creatures in being, they would become nothing: it must not be concluded that the antecedent of this statement would be false if the consequent were false.

4. Since God Who always was is the sufficient cause of the world, the world must always have been as the necessary effect of God.

5. As God necessarily wills His goodness from eternity, so He also necessarily willed the existence of creatures from eternity.

6. Because of His unchangeableness, God always produces the same effect, so that having produced the world at some time, He produced it from eternity.

7. God in the infinite bounty of His goodness made creatures from eternity.

8. God created the world from eternity because He so willed.

9. If before the world existed, it were not possible, it would not now be; if possible, there was involved matter as subject of potentiality and also some form for the matter; thus there always was a composite body.

10. Since the world was brought from potentiality to actuality, it must have been preceded by matter which must have been eternal.
Reply 1. It befits divine goodness to bring things into being through the will.

Reply 2. The capability of the heavens of being always by virtue of their incorruptibility, refers to the future, not the past.

Reply 3. The fact that the heavens would become nothing if God ceased to uphold them does not make them simply corruptible.

Reply 4. Since God caused the world by His will, the divine effect necessarily follows when, and in the manner that, the divine will decrees.

Reply 5. God necessarily wills His own goodness and all connected with it, but such is not the production of creatures.

Reply 6. Although God's will is always the same, its effect does not always flow from eternity but when the will decides.

Reply 7. On the contrary, it is more fitting for God to manifest Himself by creatures not created from eternity showing their dependence on His will.

Reply 8. God's will to create the world was eternal, but He did not will that it should exist from eternity.

Reply 9. The world was possible before it was made by the agent's active power and inasmuch as it was not a contradiction.

Reply 10. A thing is possible in the way stated in reply 9 without reference to potentiality.

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1. Cf. supra, art., 15, p. 82
2. (Cf. Aristotle, Metaphysica, v, 12.)
11. Because God is immovable, He must have created the world from eternity.

12. God must have presupposed to create from eternity, since before creation there was nothing to induce Him to act.

13. Since God's goodness is always the same, His will is always bent on the production of creatures.

14. Time, and consequently movement, which is but an instant of the end of the past and the beginning of the future, never begins or ends but is always.

15. Neither time nor movement has a beginning because they follow from a first movable which is circular.

16. Inasmuch as relatives are simultaneous, it seems that creatures which are knowables in relation to God's eternal knowledge are eternal.

17. If God preceded the world in order of nature, His effects are simultaneous and, like Him, eternal; if He preceded in duration, time and movement so preceded the world.

18. Since the duration of time can be measured neither by eternity, eviternity, nor time, it has no beginning; nor, then, has the world.

19. Again, time does not have a beginning, since it began neither in instant nor in time.

20. Since God is eternally the cause of all things, the world must be His eternal effect.

21. Just as many truths are eternal, so many beings are eternal, since truth is convertible with being.

22. If many prepositions are true from eternity, the things they signify must be eternal.
Reply 11. God begins to act in reference to a new effect resulting from His eternal action according to the disposition of His will.

Reply 12. Here is considered the agent who produces an effect in time without causing time; this does not apply to God.

Reply 13. It does not follow that creatures are produced whenever God's goodness existed, since they proceeded from Him by His will.

Reply 14. Supposing that movement did not nor will not always exist, there is no need to say that an instant is a beginning and an end of time; thus the objection is a vicious circle.

Reply 15. Eternity of movement follows not from its being circular, but it is rather the other way round.

Reply 16. God can have knowledge without the knowable thing having existence.¹

Reply 17. God precedes the world by duration of eternity; the time before the world is only imaginary.

Reply 18. Whatsoever has a beginning must have a measure of its duration insofar as it begins through movement.

Reply 19. Time begins in an instant inasmuch as the whole of time does not exist as soon as it begins.

Reply 20. God's action is eternal but His effect is not; thus God was not always a cause inasmuch as His effect was not always.

Reply 21. Truth, being the equation of thought and thing, is in the mind; thus something eternal is true by the truth in the divine mind, and this truth is eternal.

Reply 22. The truth of statements is caused by things already evident, whereas the truth of the divine mind causes all things.

¹ (Cf. Aristotle, De Categoricae, 7.)