

ADAM WODEHAM  
THE OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE

Introduction

With Adam Wodeham (c. 1298–1358) we arrive at the zenith of subtlety and complexity in later medieval philosophy. An English Franciscan, Wodeham was deeply influenced by his predecessors in the Order, particularly Scotus, Ockham, Aureol, and Walter Chatton, all of whose views come in for criticism in the present selection. The lectures from which this selection is drawn (his *Lectura secunda*, or second lecture on Lombard's *Sentences*) appear to date from around 1330. What we have is a single manuscript containing a *reportatio* of those lectures: that is, an official classroom transcript never edited by Wodeham. This at least partly accounts for the obscurity of some sections.

Wodeham was a contemporary of Robert Holcot, and the present selection, like Translation 11, concerns the things we have knowledge about. Initially, the question is whether the immediate object of knowledge is things or mental signs. Wodeham has little sympathy for the first answer, despite its immediate plausibility (§6 n.2). He also thinks it won't do to identify the objects of knowledge with signs (§§4–7). These latter sections of the question are immensely complex, and it is not always clear how the Latin should be construed, or whether it even is construable, as it stands. Keep in mind that by 'signs,' Wodeham means mental signs, and that he assumes from the start that these mental signs will be sentencelike "complexes" or "propositions." (Holcot used this same terminology in Translation 11.) To say that knowledge concerns signs or a complex is to say that it concerns a sentence in the language of thought.

The most basic problem with this view is that such mental "propositions" are concrete, individual tokens of thought. Whereas Holcot simply embraced the consequences of this position, Wodeham attempts a novel solution: He introduces abstract sentence-types to serve as objects of knowledge and belief (§§8–9). These are what we would now call a proposition or state of affairs. Wodeham himself introduces no technical

terminology, though he does remark that it “is something signifiable by the complex” (§8), which would lead Gregory of Rimini, a decade later, to defend similar entities under the phrase *complexe significabile*. As for their ontological status, Wodeham treats all such questions as misconceived. To someone who asks what man-being-an-animal (*hominem esse animal*) is, his only answer is to offer another such sentence-type, such as rational-animal-being-a-sensible-animate-substance.

With these resources in hand, Wodeham turns in the second article to a rather different issue: In knowing some proposition, must one’s knowledge somehow extend to the evidence on which that knowledge is based? As always in medieval discussions, the paradigm is demonstrative knowledge, and so the question focuses on whether knowledge concerns only the conclusion, or the conclusion and the premises. Wodeham proposes a subtle and complex compromise, based on a distinction between kinds of knowledge (§14). This debate, though directly relevant to contemporary debates in epistemology, has to my knowledge never been studied by scholars of medieval philosophy.

Though largely forgotten now, Wodeham was once included among scholasticism’s greatest theologians. Deserved or not, it seems unlikely that his reputation will ever recover. For unless the fashions and priorities of modern scholarship dramatically change course, it does not appear that philosophers (let alone theologians) will ever take the time to enter into the daunting complexity of his thought. For better or worse, and despite the heroic efforts of a few scholars, Wodeham may always remain largely a closed book to us.

For the broader medieval context of debates over the objects of knowledge, see CHLMP IV.10, “The semantics of propositions.” The Introduction to Wood’s edition of the *Lectura secunda* provides a useful overview of Wodeham’s life and work. On Wodeham as a source for Gregory of Rimini, see Gál (1977).

## The Objects of Knowledge

(*Lectura secunda dist. I Q1*)

Does the Act of Knowledge Have as Its Immediate Object  
Things or Signs?

[§1. *Initial Arguments*]

According to Augustine, in *De doctrina christiana* I [ii.2] (as cited by Lombard in the first distinction [of the *Sentences*]), "All teaching concerns either things or signs." Having asked in the prologue about the acts that precede the act of knowledge, we should ask now about the act of knowledge itself, which is an act of judgment, something we have just now considered [Prol., Q6]. And in accordance with the text cited, I ask first whether the act of knowledge has as its immediate object things or signs – that is, a complex in the mind or the things signified by the complex.

1. It seems that its immediate object is things. Consider a proposition by means of which an assent is caused (or else the incomplex cognition out of which the proposition is composed). According to the previous question, doubt two [§18], whatever the proposition signifies or represents, that is what the assent signifies or represents. But the proposition immediately signifies the thing itself. Therefore.

The minor is clear: If it were denied, there would be an infinite regress, because no sign immediately signifies itself. And so further: The immediate object of assent is what the assent immediately signifies. But such is the thing, as I have just proved. Therefore.

2. If this were not the case, then no knowledge would be real. For no knowledge is unreal because it is not, in itself, a true thing – for that is impossible. Rather, [knowledge is unreal] because its objects are not true external things but only signs of things in the mind. This is clear in the case of logic: Its objects are genera and species, which are not the external things themselves but the signs of external things. Therefore, if all knowledge were to have only the signs of things as its objects, then no knowledge would be any more real than logic. {181}

*On the contrary.*

1. Understanding (*intellectus*) and knowledge are distinguished in that understanding is a dispositional grasp (*habitus*) of principles, whereas knowledge concerns conclusions. See *Ethics* VI [1140b31–41a8] and the

frequent remarks of both the Philosopher and the Bishop of Lincoln in the *Posterior analytics*.<sup>1</sup>

2. The true and the false are found not in things but in the mind (see *Metaphysics* VI, part 8 [1027b25–27]). But the object of an act of knowledge is true. — Otherwise, it would not be a veridical sign or a veridical act (that is, it would not say or signify what is true). But an act of mind signifies only that which is its object. Therefore, the object of an act of knowledge is something true. — Therefore the object of an act of knowledge is found not in external things but in the mind.

There are two things to investigate here.

- First, is the immediate object of an act of knowledge the thing signified by the complex or the complex itself?
- Second, if it is the complex, is it one or many? And if it is the thing, is it things signified by one complex or things signified by many complexes?

(Each article assumes, on the basis of the previous question [§18], that the act itself is one and simple in its being.)

### [Article One]

#### [§2. *Arguments for Things as Objects of Knowledge*]<sup>2</sup>

Concerning the first question it might reasonably seem to someone that an external thing is the object of an act of knowledge and of any assent that can be caused immediately by a proposition signifying an external thing, whether that assent is an act of knowledge, understanding, opinion, or belief. In the same way, [it might seem to another] that the object of assent is the thing itself in the mind and the complex signifying that thing, which is the means of causing the assent. So I will set out arguments first for the one side and then for the other.

It seems that it can be proved in many ways [that the object is an external thing]. {182}

<sup>1</sup> E.g., II 19, 99b15–100b17; Robert Grosseteste, II 6 (pp. 403–8).

<sup>2</sup> The following seven arguments closely follow those of Walter Chatton. See *Sent. prol.*, q.1 a.1. Within the text, I supply the line numbers as given in J. Wey (ed.).

1. If the soul were to form a demonstration without any other prior cognition, an act of knowledge will still be caused. But if it were to form a demonstration without any other prior cognition, no act of assent to that complex will be caused. Therefore, the assent will concern the thing signified by the complex.

The first premise is evident, because an act of knowledge requires only that the soul produce a demonstration (since a demonstration is a syllogism that produces knowledge,<sup>3</sup> and knowledge is the effect of a demonstration). Therefore, leaving everything else aside, to posit a demonstration is to posit an act of knowledge [Wey, 106–19]. The same also seems to hold for an act of belief, because what seems to suffice for that act is the will's command and the complex *God is three and one*, if the soul forms it. Consequently, leaving aside every other prior cognition and positing these things, the act will be caused.

The minor is evident, because the soul assents only to what has been cognized. Therefore, if that complex does not signify [itself], then the soul will not assent to it [Wey, 120–27]. Therefore, if that demonstration or an article of faith is posited, and neither the article nor the demonstration nor its conclusion is cognized, then the assent that is caused has as its object neither the article of faith nor the conclusion of the demonstration.

2. The cognition of a proposition no more suffices to cause assent to the proposition itself than that proposition, composed of cognitions of an external thing, suffices to cause assent to that thing – given that the thing is as evidently and perfectly cognized by the cognitions that compose the proposition as the proposition itself is by the cognition through which it is cognized. Therefore, if assent to the proposition is caused in the one case, then assent to the thing signified by the proposition is caused in the other case. But assent to the proposition is caused by a cognition of the proposition. If not, then no one would assent to any complex truth, which is false, because with regard to syllogisms and propositions there can be demonstration, knowledge, opinion, and the like. Therefore, it follows that assent to a thing will be caused by a proposition composed of cognitions of that thing [Wey, 324–36].

3. Some of the articles of the faith had a different character in the Old Law and the New: Then they were propositions about the future (such as *God will be incarnate*); now they are about the present or the past. These complexes have a different character, since one was true then whereas the

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Post. An.* I 2, 71b17–18.

other was false. So if the act of belief corresponding to these propositions were to have such a complex as its object, then that act of belief would have had a different character now and then. As a result, since both belief and faith concern the same object, faith (acquired and even infused) would have a different character [then] and now [Wey, 363-76]. {183}

4. A disposition (*habitus*) causes a cognition of the thing it is a disposition of, and so likewise does a species. Likewise, acts of knowledge and imagination cause cognitions concerning their objects. Therefore, to a much greater extent, a proposition composed of a thing represents the external thing more perfectly than a disposition or species does [Wey, 338-52].

5. The proposition in the mind and the external thing it signifies are distinct. Therefore, they can be cognized by different cognitions, and consequently the soul assents with two different assents to the thing signified and to the proposition. Consequently, its assent to the thing itself does not have the proposition as its object [Wey, 359-61].

6. Assent to a proposition presupposes assent to the thing signified by the proposition. For one first assents that a thing is in reality as the proposition denotes it to be, and then assents that the proposition is true. Therefore, an assent caused by a proposition signifying some thing has as its object not that proposition but the thing signified by the proposition.

Confirmation: By natural order, knowledge of the soul's acts (e.g., in logic) presupposes knowledge of the things signified [by those acts]. For one acquires no knowledge of the nature of demonstration without the experience of a demonstration. But experiencing a demonstration and forming it causes the assent and the act of knowledge that it is naturally suited to cause. Consequently, knowledge and assent concerning a complex in the mind presuppose assent to the thing signified by that complex [Wey, 291-303].

7. It is not apparent how the premises of a demonstration would cause an act of assent to the conclusion, because they no more signify or represent the conclusion than the conclusion signifies or represents them. But they cause a cognition concerning only what they represent, or else concerning themselves. Therefore, the act of knowledge that they cause concerns not the conclusion but the thing signified [by the conclusion] [Wey, 305-22].

These are the fundamental arguments that persuade some to say that every theological truth signifying God (or composed of proper cognitions<sup>o</sup> of God) is capable of causing in its own way an act of assent - for example,

an act of belief – whose object is God himself. More generally, they say that a complex truth is never the object of the assent that it causes in us.

[§3. *Arguments for the Complex as the Object of Knowledge*]

Some arguments should now be introduced that can establish the opposite position.

1. It appears that no one believes or assents to nothing. But frequently that which is signified by a complex causing assent to belief is absolutely (*pure*) nothing, as is the assent that can be caused by this complex, *the soul of the Antichrist will exist*. {184}

2. One does not assent and believe less when the complex *the devil is the devil* is formed than when the complex *God is three and one* is formed. Therefore, if assent is not to the complex but only to the thing signified by the complex, then one assents and believes as firmly in the devil as in God – even assents more firmly and more clearly, because more evidently.

3. It follows not only that one believes in and assents to the devil, but that at the same time one dissents from and disbelieves in God. Proof: I ask, what is it that one dissents from and disbelieves in, once the complex *God is not God* is formed? For one experiences the dissent's being caused in oneself. If that which one dissents from and disbelieves in is God himself, then I have my conclusion. If that which one dissents from and disbelieves in is not God but the complex, then I have my main conclusion. For the complex that causes assent is no less the object of such an assent than the complex that causes dissent is the object of dissent. Therefore, etc.

4. That is not all that follows. It also follows that at one and the same time one assents to and dissents from the same thing. For as I assumed yesterday [Prol. Q6 §20], and as the Philosopher and the Commentator make clear, in the last comment on *Metaphysics* VI [8], contradictory propositions can exist at the same time in the soul. So let these two propositions exist at the same time in one's soul:

*God is God*

*God is not God.*

Forming the one will cause assent; forming the other will cause dissent. And if one's assent is not to the complexes themselves – which would be our main conclusion – then it is to exactly the same thing, namely, to

God. And this is confirmed, because even according to him,<sup>4</sup> contradictories signify altogether the same thing. Otherwise, as he says, they would not be contradictories.

5. This view contends that God is either the total object or only the partial object of the assent caused by a proposition composed from proper cognitions of God. If partial, then the complex that caused the assent would not be excluded from being its object at the same time. If total, then [I argue] to the contrary that forming the complex would be superfluous once there was a simple evident apprehension, because an evident grasp of the total object of assent is suited, as it seems, to cause an assent with respect to that object. Also, what is neither the total object of some proposition nor the proposition is not the total object of the assent. But no simple thing (which is precisely what God is) is the total object of some proposition, and certainly it is not the proposition. Therefore, etc. That it is not the total object of a proposition, I prove. For a present proposition signifies or consignifies something further than what its subject signifies {185} no less than does a past or future proposition with the same predicate and subject. But insofar as these [propositions] signify or consignify something further – namely, an actual or possible time – each one of the three propositions could be true while the others with the same subject and predicate were false.

6. *To be*, which is the mark of composition, signifies either something or nothing. If it signifies and consignifies nothing, then there is no reason for it to appear in speech. If it signifies something, it signifies no more one thing than another, because it is indifferently related to all entities and can connect (*copulare*) anything with anything. And whether it signifies connection or composition on the part of a thing, or unity and identity between the terms (*extrema*) or the things signified by the terms of the proposition, it will always be the case that the proposition signifies something or things not signified by the subject or the predicate. And then as before: The total object<sup>o</sup> of assent is either the complex itself – and then we have our conclusion – or the total of what the complex signifies. Consequently,<sup>o</sup> the habit [of faith] would have a different character in the Old and the New Law as a result of its being caused by a complex of a different character, just as it would as a result of its having a complex of a different character as its object [see §2 n.3].

[In reply] it is said that an assent of a different character would be caused

<sup>4</sup> Chatton, *Reportatio* I, d.2, q.1.



if the predicate or the subject were to have a different character, because a more evident grasp [of the terms] causes a more evident assent. This would not occur, however, if only the copula were to change.

On the contrary: When the copula changes its species, the predicate changes its species, because the force of the verb plays a part in the predicate (*tenet se a parte praedicati res verbi*). Indeed, changing the copula causes dissent in one case and assent in another.

7. That that assent has a different character, etc., establishes nothing. Proof: No two acts differing only numerically with respect to numerically the same object are so related that one is the faith and the other heresy. But to believe that the son of God will be incarnated is heresy, whereas to believe that he has been incarnated is the true faith. Therefore, these acts do not differ only numerically.

8. No proposition would be known per se unless a proposition were the object of assent.

Seven against seven.<sup>5</sup>

#### [§4A. *The Complex Is Not the Total Object of Knowledge*]

In reply to this article, first, it does not seem to me that the complex is the total object of an act of knowledge.

1. If it were, then to know {186} would not be to cognize the cause of a thing, both that it is its cause and that it is impossible for it to be otherwise.<sup>6</sup> The inference is plain, because the complex is not the cause of a thing, and because to cognize the complex alone would not be to cognize that it is its cause and that it is impossible for it to be otherwise.

2. Also, experience shows that one's assent frequently encompasses the thing's being so in reality. Take, for example, the assent that you are sitting there. It is as if the assent extends (*fertur*) not to the complex but completely directly to the thing's being so in reality.

3. Also, as was proved in the previous question [§20], an assent is not just the proposition itself. (And if it were, we would have our conclusion, because the proposition is not a distinct apprehension of itself.) Nor is it blind approval on the part of the mind, because then no assent would be a cognition or be evident, except by extrinsic denomination. Therefore,

<sup>5</sup> There were seven arguments in §2, but here there seem to be eight. Indeed, the last argument is explicitly labeled the eighth (*octavo*). But perhaps the scribe gets this wrong: Perhaps it should be counted as the seventh, and the seventh should be counted not as an independent argument but as a preemptive reply to the argument in §2 n.3. Then we would have "seven against seven."

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* I 2, 71b9-12.

an assent is an apprehension either of those things that are apprehended by prior apprehensions, as I held there [§18], or of both those things and the complex, at the same time. Thus an assent does not solely concern the complex.

[§4B. *In Defense of the Rejected View*]

The view that I have just rejected could be defended on two interpretations, each of which would hold that it is solely the complex that is the object of the act of assent.

The first would hold that the subject or predicate is that which is understood, whether it be a thing or a mental construct (*fictum*). And then one would have to say next, as I mentioned in the previous question [§6], that the assent has the thing itself as its immediate partial object, but has the whole complex of which the thing is a part as its total object.

The second would hold that the thoughts (*intentiones*) themselves are the subject and predicate, and not that which is understood, whether that be a thing or a concept mentally constructed (*fictus*) or formed. On this interpretation, the assent would immediately encompass solely that complex, in such a way as not to encompass the thing.

Ockham, as I said in the previous question [§6], follows the first approach, in the first book of his *Sentences* commentary [prol. Q1]. And here I add that Scotus follows the same approach: For in the penultimate question of his commentary on *Metaphysics* VI [Q3 n.37] he holds that truth or falsity is always in the proposition formally {187}, because the proposition always corresponds or fails to correspond to the external thing (that is, to the thing signified, whether internal or external). But truth or falsity is not always in that act of composing as an object, because that correspondence is not always apprehended.

Scotus raises an objection against this [ibid., n.38], "because it seems that at once when first principles are apprehended they are cognized to be true." He replies that "on account of the evident relationship between the terms, the intellect that composes them at once perceives that the act of composition corresponds to the reality (*entitati*) of the terms being composed." And "therefore, it could be said that there is another act there, a reflexive one, but one that is not perceived because it is simultaneous. In other cases, such as conclusions, these acts differ in time."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> A marginal note at this point in the manuscript remarks that "this solves almost all the arguments of Chatton." Indeed, Wodeham himself will make use of this strategy several times below (§6, §10 n.1).

But Scotus raises an objection [ibid., n.39]: "How will the first act concerning first principles be reflexive?" He replies: "It is not the first act, the composition, [that is reflexive,] but the second, the assent, and it could be said to judge that which can be judged."

Here Brother Scotus plainly indicates that those terms that the intellect composes are the entities that are signified and not the thoughts (*intentiones*) of those entities: For he holds that an act of composition is true on account of its correspondence to the reality of the things being composed. And this is certainly not on account of its correspondence to simple acts, because that would be consistent with the proposition's being false.

Also, in his commentary on *Perihermenias* I, Q2 [n.9], he holds the same view – namely, that the external thing is the term of the proposition, though not insofar as it is external. He plainly says there that the composition is not of species or likenesses but of things, "not as they exist but as they are understood." (In the same way, we understand that which is signified by a word, "but yet this whole composite, the thing-as-understood, is not signified, because it is a being only *per accidens*" [ibid., n.8].) So he says there next [n.9] that "there is said to be truth and falsity in the intellect's composition and division, because this composition is caused by the intellect." (Supply *in reality*, with regard to the nature of the composition, but *intentionally*, with regard to the terms.) "And it exists in the intellect as what is cognized exists in the cognizer, not as an accident exists in a subject." {188} (Gloss this exactly opposite to the first gloss.<sup>8</sup>) "And so I grant that the parts of the composition exist in the simple intellect as what is cognized exists in the cognizer. And in this way the things in the intellect are not just species." – Therefore, it is clear that according to Scotus the object of assent is a complex, and a complex of this sort.

Here I should mention that someone holding that this sort of complex is the immediate object of assent can imagine the complex in one of two ways:

(a) One can imagine that there are three acts in the intellect: two absolute and one comparative. As was mentioned in the previous question [§5], the mark of mental composition is not the apprehension of the terms, although we use the absolute apprehensions of the terms as instruments in making comparisons.

(b) Alternatively, one could coherently enough imagine that although

<sup>8</sup> Perhaps Wodeham means that the first phrase should be read *intentionally*, the second *in reality* (reversing the order of the previous parenthetical remark).

simple absolute apprehensions are naturally presupposed, still the comparative act that naturally presupposes them is formally a kind of apprehension of those same terms. On this view, if God were to annihilate those absolute apprehensions and conserve the comparative act (which in itself is in fact a kind of absolute entity), we would thereby have the whole proposition. And so it could be said that any proposition in the world is in itself a simple act, as regards its being, although not as regards its signifying – just as is claimed for an act of assent [see Prol. Q6 §18].

Whichever option is maintained, it should be said on this view that the process is as follows:

(i) The thing is apprehended by a simple act of understanding (*simplici intelligentia*).

(ii) A composition evident in the third degree is formed.<sup>9</sup>

(iii) That composition or complex is apprehended by a simple act of apprehension.

(iv) One assents to the complex, in such a way that although the assent is a kind of apprehension (not the one by which it is caused, of course), still it is not an apprehension that things are as the proposition signifies. (For that the evident proposition suffices.) Instead, the assent concerns only the complex itself. By this, one apprehends its correspondence to what is apprehended through it (that is, through the proposition [=ii]) and through the simple cognition [=iii] that mediates between the conceived proposition and the assent.<sup>10</sup>

And so as to the experience alleged for the contrary view – namely, that when I assent I experience myself being drawn to things being so in reality [§4A n.2] – this will occur not through the act of assent [=iv], but through the act of evidently apprehending things being so. This act is the composition itself [=ii]. {189}

### [§5. Arguments against the View of Scotus and Ockham]

1. Against the view just set out, I am persuaded by the fact that no assent would be evident by intrinsic denomination [see §4A n.3].

<sup>9</sup> A proposition evident in the third degree cannot fail to signify correctly and is designed to compel the intellect, assuming God's general influence (see Prol. Q6 §13).

<sup>10</sup> This passage is obscure, but seems to go as follows: The assent formed at stage (iv) apprehends the conformity between how things are and how they are signified by the proposition formed at stage (ii). This assent is caused by the simple apprehension formed at stage (iii), which is an apprehension of the stage (ii) proposition, and thereby acts as a bridge between stages (ii) and (iv).

Keep in mind that Wodeham is constructing this account on behalf of his opponents, Scotus and Ockham. Its obscurity is no embarrassment to Wodeham.

2. Nor would knowledge be to cognize the cause of a thing, both that it is, etc. For on this view, if God were to annihilate a proposition, then even though I might have a noncomplex apprehension of a thing, insofar as assent takes the place of the absolute simple cognition that was in its way a part of the proposition on that view, I would still not apprehend its being so or not so.<sup>11</sup>

3. I am persuaded, third, by the fact that a simple cognition never suffices to cause assent except when a complex is formed from it. For otherwise, if a simple apprehension did suffice to cause assent, then a proposition would not be posited as an entity (*ut quid*). Now a simple understanding may be an act of cognizing a proposition as its object, just as much as a house or paleness is also an object. As a result, if a complex were first formed from that simple understanding, such as

*This proposition corresponds to reality*

and [if] the assent has as its object the total object of the complex apprehension by means of which it is caused (for why one part more than another?) then, through the assent, one immediately apprehends that things are so in reality.

4. Also, it is impossible to apprehend that a proposition corresponds to a thing without apprehending that the thing is so in reality. For to apprehend that something corresponds is to apprehend it relationally, and this does not occur without an apprehension of the relatum. In this case, the relatum is *being so*. But even when the proposition itself does not exist, one can apprehend through the assent that it corresponds, according to this reply. And then its being so is apprehended not through the proposition, because we are supposing that God preserves the assent without any proposition. Therefore, it is apprehended through the assent.

5. Also, for the same reason that that second proposition could cause an assent that the first corresponds to the external thing, so the first proposition – since it is equally evident – could cause assent that things are so in reality.

#### [§6. Conclusions 1–3]

1. Therefore, I grant, as before [§4A], that the complex is not the adequate object of assent.

<sup>11</sup> Compare §4A n.1. Perhaps the idea here is that one might satisfy the Aristotelian definition of knowledge, in virtue of one's simple apprehension, and yet be unable to grasp the proposition, because God has destroyed that.

2. Second, I say that the adequate object of assent is not God himself, nor {190} any simple thing (*res*). Five of the arguments stated above against Chatton's position persuade me of this conclusion, beginning with the second and continuing [§3 nn.2-6].

3. The third conclusion (as it seems to me) is that the complex is not the partial object of an act of assent necessitated (given God's general influence) by such a complex.<sup>12</sup>

3.1 For everything that is a partial or total object of an act of assent is by nature previously comprehended. For as the first disputant assumes [§2 n.1] – rightly in this case – “the soul assents only to what has been cognized.” But I do not want to say with him that the soul assents to whatever has been previously cognized, because then it would assent to the devil when assenting that

*The devil is the devil.*

Rather, I want to say that (i) nothing is the object of an act of assent – either total or partial – without being previously cognized by a distinct cognition that is solely an apprehension, not an assent. But (ii) the complex necessitating<sup>o</sup> the assent is not<sup>o</sup> cognized prior to the assent. Therefore, etc.

i. Proof of the major: Otherwise there would be no need to posit that either a proposition or a simple apprehension is a necessary prerequisite for the assent. As a result, the assent could be the first apprehension of that which is partially assented to – i.e., [the assent itself] would be the partial object of the assent. [This is absurd.]

ii.1. I prove the minor: An assent necessitated by a complex is necessary unless God impedes it, provided the necessitating complex exists; otherwise [that complex] would not necessitate. But the intellect is necessitated to no reflexive and solely apprehensive act in such a way as to be unable to avoid it by the will's command – even if there is a direct act. The act which would apprehend the complex would clearly be reflexive, however, and it is not naturally necessary, [even] if the direct act exists.

I prove the minor (that the intellect is necessitated to no reflexive act): Either that act would be (a) an assent or an act of judgment, and [this is irrelevant because] the only thing under discussion now is a cognition *prior*

<sup>12</sup> The ensuing arguments for this conclusion are extremely difficult to follow, and the correct translation is sometimes unclear, perhaps because of faults with the original Latin text. Wodeham's basic claim seems to be that while some complexes (propositions) do necessitate assent, in that one can't form the proposition without assenting, nevertheless in such a case it is not the proposition itself that one assents to.

to the assent, by which the partial object of the assent would be cognized. Or (b) it would be a proposition, and a proposition by nature presupposes a simple act. Or (c) it would be a simple [act], and then I do not see by what reasoning one direct act could necessitate the intellect (be it willing or not) to a simple reflexive cognition without *every* direct act doing so, by the same reasoning. If that were the case, then there would be an infinite number [of acts] at once. For this reason I held elsewhere that no [direct act necessitates a simple reflexive cognition].

ii.2. Also, that prior [reflexive] cognition would be either (a) a simple act or (b) a complex or compounding act. Not the first, because no simple apprehension produces assent unless a complex is previously formed from it. Otherwise, it would produce infinitely many assents at once, because it could successively produce infinitely many by means of infinitely many complexes. And without its being a part of the complex there is no more reason for it to produce one of these than another.

Neither is it (b) a complex act, because for whatever reason it would be suited to cause assent, so for the same reason would the first [act] composed of direct acts, {191} since it is just as much evident without this [complex reflexive act] as that is without a posterior [act]. And if that [complex reflexive act] does also require a posterior [act], then there will be an infinite regress, with every act of assent presupposing infinitely many propositions. This is false. But once this act is formed then, provided the prior direct proposition was evident (in the way frequently explained earlier [Prol. Q6 §13]), it necessitates another assent – namely, the assent that the first complex sign corresponded to what it signifies. Two things follow from this: First, that what is signified by this reflexive proposition is that the direct proposition corresponds to what it signifies. The second thing that follows is that there will be an infinite regress in complexes, if these [reflexive acts] are posited. For by whatever reason a first complex necessitates assent to a second complex, it necessitates assent to a third, if the first and second are evident complexes in the way explained earlier. Therefore,<sup>o</sup> [no such complex reflexive act should be posited].

3.2. Also, for my principal thesis: As that other one argued [§2 n.1], a demonstration is a syllogism producing knowledge. And I add that not [only is this the case], but also any principle known per se is a proposition producing the assent that is called *understanding*.

But you would very easily reply that to say it would cause a naturally prior apprehension of itself and together with that apprehension concur in causing an act of knowledge is not to deny but to affirm that it is a

syllogism producing knowledge. The definition of the syllogism from *Prior analytics* I [24b18–20] confirms this reply: “A syllogism is a [discourse] in which, certain things being posited and granted, something else necessarily follows” – that is, assent to the conclusion or to the thing signified by it or to both. Aristotle does not say just “certain things being posited” but “posited *and granted*.” But something is apprehended before it is mentally granted; therefore. Therefore, this is likewise the case for a demonstration in which, certain things being posited, etc. But that act of granting is neither the demonstration nor part of the demonstration. And without that act of granting – that is, an assent – the assent corresponding to the conclusion will not be caused.

Now I suppose that I can very well believe in this way that [the assent], though naturally prior, would necessitate another assent. Therefore, a demonstration does not cause knowledge in this way without there being another concurrent cause apart from God and the soul. And so that argument [3.2], though it is attractive, is easily evaded.

But for me, as far as my conclusion is concerned, the previous argument [3.1] suffices in reduction against this evasion. For although the assents corresponding to the major and the minor and to the evidentness of the syllogism are presupposed by the assent corresponding to the conclusion, still no simple apprehension of any part of the whole demonstration [is required]. [For] however much from the impact of its force (*activitatis*) {192} a principle known per se or the whole demonstration would at once cause an apprehension of itself, either unperceived (as Scotus imagines above [§4B] in the case of first principles) or else perceived, still, if by divine omnipotence we set this apprehension aside and retain the demonstration with its force, then, provided the premises are assented to, it does not seem that it will fail to be sufficiently evident to necessitate intellectual assent, if the intellect is ever necessitated. And yet [this assent] will not concern the complex, given that no complex is then conceived; therefore. Therefore, the complex is not part of the aforesaid assent which it necessitates.

#### [§7. Conclusions 4–6]

4. The fourth conclusion is that the complex certainly is the partial object of some reflexive assent – but one that it does not necessitate. For example, it is the partial object of the assent in which one assents that that complex is true or corresponds to the thing signified's standing so, and the like. For



whatever is apprehended through a complex necessitating some assent is the partial object of that assent, as is clear from the preceding. But it is the *initial* proposition that is apprehended through a complex necessitating the assent in which one assents that the proposition is true. Therefore.

5. The fifth conclusion is that no proposition is the total object of any possible assent. For any possible assent corresponds in object with some complex by means of which it is caused, so that the total object of this complex is the object of assent. But no proposition is the total object of any proposition. Therefore, neither is it the total object of any assent.

I prove the minor: For such a proposition would necessarily be composed from an incomplex cognition of the terms of a proposition; but no proposition is equivalent to its subject in its significance, as long as its subject is a simple apprehension, because no such apprehension complexly signifies that something is or is not [so]; therefore.

6. The sixth conclusion is that the immediate object of an act of assent is the total object of the complex necessitating the assent, speaking of an assent that is unconditionally evident.<sup>13</sup> Or, speaking generally, its immediate total object is the total object or total significate of the proposition immediately corresponding to it, co-causing that assent and necessarily presupposed by it – or it is the total of the objects of many such propositions.

I prove this. First, because its object is either (1) a proposition or (2) the thing signified by the subject of the proposition, when it is composed solely of proper cognitions of the thing, {193} or (3) both together, or (4) the total significate of the proposition or propositions (since this remains in doubt until the second article<sup>14</sup>). But none of the first three; therefore the fourth. The major is clear, because nothing else can be assigned. The minor is clear from the preceding conclusions.

Also, of all the other things that could be posited as its total and sole object, it seems that the *correspondence* of the complex to its total significate would be the object. But this is false, because then if by divine omnipotence the assent caused by the complex remained in the absence of that proposition, the assent would be false, since now there would be no

<sup>13</sup> In the case, that is, of an assent evident in the third degree, where the complex necessitates the assent (see note 9).

<sup>14</sup> The second article asks whether an assent has for its total object only the conclusion of an argument or else the whole argument, conclusion and premises.

correspondence, its foundation having been removed. The consequent is false.<sup>15</sup>

Also, if we suppose that the total object of the assent is the total significate of the complex necessitating the assent, all the absurdities adduced in the arguments previously posited for both sides are avoided. Therefore.

[§8. *Doubts and Replies*]

1. But contrary to this reply. First, what is it that you are calling the total object of the proposition?

2. Also, whatever you will have posited as its total object, it is either something or nothing. If nothing, then nothing is the object of an act of assent, which is certainly false. If something, then either God or a creature. And whether it is this one or that one, it is nevertheless a substance or an accident. And every such thing can be signified by the subject of some proposition.

3. Also, whatever can be the total object of a proposition can be the object of assent or dissent, as you hold. But a simple thing is such [as to be the total object of a proposition]. Therefore. Proof of the minor: For it seems that any thing at all, however simple, can be signified complexly and incomplexly. Therefore, there need not be a difference in the significate but only in the mode of signifying.

4. Also, the principal arguments of the article are against you, on either side [§§2-3].

[*Reply to the First Doubt*]

In reply to the first of these we should say that the total object of a proposition is its significate. Its significate is either being-so-as-the-proposition-denotes or not-being-so. For example, the object of *God is God* is God-being-God and the significate of *Man is pale* or *Paleness inheres in man* is man-being-pale or paleness-inhering-in-man. These are not propositions, because {194} if no proposition existed in the natural realm, God would nonetheless be God, and man would be pale or paleness would

<sup>15</sup> That is, it is false that the assent would be false. An assent formed in such naturally impossible circumstances would still be true. Compare the similar argument in §5 n.2.

inhere in man. And just as I have said for affirmatives, so I say for negatives. The object of *Man is not a donkey* is man-not-being-a-donkey. And man-not-being-a-donkey is not a proposition, except when understood materially or simply (namely, for the sign). For if there were no proposition, man would still not be a donkey. And that man is not a donkey no more depends on a proposition than does a man or a donkey.

From this I argue for my thesis: Being-so-in-reality or not-being-so does not depend on an act of the soul or on any sign. And every such thing can be signified, and not by any incomplex mental act (that is, not by a simple understanding); therefore, by a composite or divided sign (that is, by means of an affirmative or negative proposition).

You will say that the same question still remains. For what is God-being-God-in-reality or man-being-an-animal-in-reality? Either it is complex or incomplex. You deny it is complex.<sup>16</sup> If incomplex, it is either a substance or an accident. And in the first example no substance is to be granted except God, nor any substance but man in the second example. And thus the first view holds [§2], that God himself is the subject of the first proposition and of the corresponding assent, and man the subject of the second.

I say that God-being-God is the-first-entity-being-God or infinite-entity-being-God or pure-act-being-God (or the converse). In the same way, man-being-an-animal-in-reality is rational-animal-being-an-animal-in-reality and man-being-a-sensible-animate-substance-in-reality. Or, to give a complete analysis, man-being-an-animal is rational-animal-being-a-sensible-animate-substance.

And when you ask: Is man-being-an-animal complex or incomplex?, I say that for each of these a distinction must be drawn – as in any statement where one term is a second intention and the other a first intention. For instance, *Man is a species* needs distinguishing, but not *Man is an animal* or *A species is predicated of many numerically different individuals*.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, a distinction must be drawn regarding these [propositions], because man-being-an-animal can supposit for and be taken for the dictum of a proposition,<sup>18</sup> and in this sense it is indeed complex or incomplex. Or it can be

<sup>16</sup> That is, Wodeham has denied that it is a proposition, in the first paragraph of the reply to this first doubt.

<sup>17</sup> *Man is a species* needs distinguishing, because it is true only when 'man' is taken to refer to the species *mankind* (second intention) rather than to an individual (first intention).

<sup>18</sup> The dictum of a proposition refers to a way of expressing a sentence in Latin, by putting the verb

taken for that which is signified by such a dictum, in which case it is neither complex nor incomplex, but is something signifiable by the complex — for example, by the complex *Man is an animal*. {195}

[§9. Reply to the Second Doubt]

In reply to the second [doubt] we should say that man-being-an-animal is not a thing (*aliquid*) or a substance, but is instead man-being-something and man-being-a-substance-or-accident. And this agrees with Aristotle, who says in the *Categories* [1b25–27] that of incomplex things, “each signifies substance or quantity or quality,” etc. He does not say that *each and every* thing signifies substance or quantity, etc. For one sign signifies adequately not substance but something-being-a-substance and so forth, whereas another sign signifies something-not-being-a-substance and so forth. Also, elsewhere in the *Categories* [4b8–10]: “because the thing exists or does not exist, the statement [is said to be] true or false.” He does not say “because the thing or nonthing.” Again, in the chapter of the *Categories* that begins “Things are said to be opposed,” he says [12b12–15]: “For just as an affirmation is opposed to a negation (*he sits*, for example, to *he does not sit*) so too for the thing underlying each (that is, *sitting* versus *not sitting*).”

You will say: man-being-an-animal is either something or nothing. I say that neither should be maintained, and that it is not something but rather man-being-something, as was said. So I ask you: Is a people a man or not a man? One should maintain neither, and say that it is not a man but men.

You will say: If it is not nothing, it is something. So I argue in the other case: If a people is not a nonman, it is a man. [We should deny] each inference.

You will say: So what is it? The correct reply is that it is a-rational-animal-being-a-sensible-animate-substance. More properly, man-being-an-animal is not a what (*quid*) but rather being-a-what. And so the question is inept, just as it would be an incongruous and quibbling question to ask “What is *Man is an animal*?” For man is an animal in reality, leaving aside every proposition. And it should not be maintained that *Man is an animal* is a substance or an accident, or that it is something or nothing, because

in the infinitive and the subject in the accusative. The example here is *hominem esse animal* (man-being-an-animal).

none of these replies would be intelligible or say anything (*aliquid dictu*). Such questions presuppose something not true. And when the interrogative question is posed "What follows (*accidit*)?" it would be more proper to reply "Many things" rather than "Only one," etc.

Further, in reply to the main argument [§8 n.2]: I do not deny that man-being-an-animal is signifiable by the subject of some proposition, since otherwise in denying the claim I would be granting the claim. But it is not signified by the subject of a proposition {196} necessitating an assent in which we agree precisely that man is an animal, nor [even] by the subject of a proposition signifying precisely that man is an animal. For it is signifiable by the subject of this proposition:

*That man is an animal is true,*

and is also signifiable by

*It is true that a man is a sensible animate substance.*

But the first and second need to be distinguished according to the third mode of equivocation, whereas the third does not.<sup>19</sup>

[*Reply to the Third Doubt*]

In reply to the third doubt, I deny the minor. In reply to the proof, it is true that any thing is signifiable either complexly or incomplexly. But I say that it is not signifiable by a complex sign adequate to it, because the mark of any composition<sup>20</sup> (and every sign equivalent in its mode of signifying) co-signifies at least a present, past, or future time, which is not co-signified in this way by any sign signifying only incomplexly (any mental sign, though not any vocal sign).

You will say: Leaving aside every conceivable thing, and positing only God, God is God. Therefore, God-being-God is nothing but God. And so there are those (namely, Chatton and [John of] Reading in his *Quodlibet* q.5, in treating and proving his third conclusion) who grant that God is the significate of that mental proposition, though not the vocal one.

I reply: Leaving aside every time and positing an angel, the angel is

<sup>19</sup> That is, equivocation based on differences in supposition. See Ockham, *Summa logicae* III-4, ch. 4. It's not clear what three items are intended here.

<sup>20</sup> The mark (*nota*) of a composition is the copula: to be (*esse*). See §3 n.6.

created or conserved, and yet the angel is not angel-being-created-or-conserved, nor is the angel angel-existing because then angel-not-existing would openly include a contradiction, and yet provided only that we posit an angel, an angel exists. I say, therefore, that it is one thing to ask

*What is that which, when it is posited, God is God or an angel exists?*

and another to ask

*What is God-being-God or angel-existing?*

To the first we should reply that it is God or an angel. To the second we should reply not in this way but through another dictum, composed from a description of the prior dictum.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, although God is that which, when it is posited, by that very fact God is God, and an angel is that which, when it is posited, an angel exists, still God is not God-being-[God], and an angel is not angel-existing. For God is no more God-being-God than an angel is {197} angel-existing or angel-existing-and-God-existing. But just because we posit the existence of an angel and so<sup>o</sup> an angel exists, it does not follow that an angel is angel-existing or angel-and-God-existing, because then for the same reason an angel would be angel-having-existed and angel-going-to-exist. For we need not posit any thing else in order that an angel has existed or is going to exist. And since whatever things are the same to the same thing are themselves the same,<sup>22</sup> angel-existing would be angel-having-existed and angel-going-to-exist. The consequent is false.

Moreover, if an angel and angel-existing were the same, then to understand one would be the same as to understand the other. But to understand angel-not-existing<sup>o</sup> is to understand an angel. Therefore, to understand angel-not-existing would be to understand angel-existing. [This is absurd.]

Also, just as God is that which when it alone is posited God is God, so God is that which when it alone is posited an angel does not exist. Therefore, God would be angel-not-existing.

Also, this is not valid: Socrates is that which when he alone is posited, every man would be Socrates; therefore, Socrates is man-being-Socrates. Many similar examples show that just because when God alone is posited, God is God, it does not follow that God is God-being-God.

<sup>21</sup> For an instance of this strategy, see the penultimate paragraph of §8.

<sup>22</sup> See Euclid, *Elements of Geometry*, axiom 1.

## [§10. Reply to the Fourth Doubt]

The replies for the first side [§2] do not go against my conclusion, in that they neither prove nor disprove my view. Instead, they prove only that the object of assent is not the complex by means of which the assent is caused. And this is granted.

To the first for the other side [§3 n.1]: Prima facie it seems no more absurd, even in this case, to posit one object of assent than to posit an object of a different intention. But still, according to the above [§9], the total object of that assent is neither something nor nothing, neither an entity nor a nonentity, neither a man nor a nonman. It is rather angel-going-to-exist or something-going-to-exist. The second argument and those following [§3 nn.2–8; see §6 n.2] support my view.

You will say on the contrary: Given at least that the devil is a partial object of assent, it follows that you partially assent to the devil. I say this does not follow, as is clear in this example: God is the partial object of the hatred with which I supremely hate God's not existing, and yet I neither partially nor totally hate God. {198}

1. If, however, someone wants to hold that the complex is the partial or total object of the act of assent, then he would reply to the first argument [of §2] as Scotus does [§4B]: Once the demonstration is formed, before someone assents to the conclusion, he perceives the apprehension itself before he assents. Every assent, then, is a reflexive act. And it should be denied that the demonstration would cause the assent, even setting aside every other cognition prior to assent.

2. To the second, one should say that a proposition suffices to cause assent neither to the proposition nor to the thing until it itself is apprehended. But I say that in each case the proposition (assuming it is unconditionally evident on the basis of its terms) together with the apprehension of that proposition does suffice to cause assent to such a proposition. Yet it does not follow from this that it would equally or even nearly suffice to cause an assent to the thing, because the thing is not suited to be an object of assent directly, but only an object of apprehension, just as sound is not the object of vision.

3. To the third, I grant that their act of belief, and also their acquired habit of faith, had in some sense a different character. But it does not follow that therefore their *infused* faith had a different character. For ac-

according to those [who hold this view] it has the same character with regard to all articles of belief. This is not the case for acquired faith.

4. To the fourth: If it were valid, it would show that the soul could cause an infinite series of specifically distinct acts with respect to numerically the same object, without any other [object]. So the inference is invalid.

5. To the fifth: The inference is invalid, and the reason has been stated [n.2].

6. To the sixth, I grant that we assent that a thing is so in reality before we assent that the proposition is true. For, according to those [who hold this view], to assent that a thing is so in reality is just to assent to a proposition signifying this, although the proposition signifying it is not the proposition signifying that the proposition exists. So the argument is irrelevant.

To the confirmation, one should give the same reply as to the first argument [n.1] and at the same time add that the logical assent concerning a demonstration does not have as its total object the demonstration, but a proposition having the demonstration as its subject or predicate.

7. To the seventh, I grant that premises do not cause assent to the conclusion, just as they do not represent it – as you assume. But the premises, together solely with the apprehension of the conclusion, plus the assent to the premises, surely are sufficient for this. {199}

## [Article Two]

### [§11. Outline]

The second article asks whether an act of knowledge has as its object (i) things being as is signified by one proposition alone (namely, the conclusion), or (ii) things being as is signified by it and the premises all at once, joined syllogistically. In terms of the other view (which holds that the complex is the object of assent), this is to ask whether the assent, which is the act of knowledge, has for its total object (i) the conclusion alone or (ii) also the premises, all at once – that is, the whole demonstration.

First, I will state some of the more effective arguments suggesting that its object is things being as is signified by all the propositions required to make it evident. Second, I will state some arguments that could establish



that its object is only things being as the concluding proposition signifies. Third, a choice must be made about which I believe to be true.

[§12. *That Knowledge Concerns the Whole Demonstration*]

1. One could argue first as follows. That an assent caused by a demonstration (that is, an act of knowledge), has as its object (i) things being as the conclusion signifies, and in addition (ii) things being as the premises signify – this is no less true than that an assent caused by some principle has as its object (i) things being as that principle signifies and in addition (ii) whatever is signified by the incomplex cognitions from which the principle is composed. For the act of knowing the premises is just as much required – with equal necessity – as assenting to what a principle signifies requires a cognition of its terms (or of what the terms signify). But an evident assent corresponding to some principle has for its partial objects the objects of the simple apprehensions from which the principle is composed. Therefore. {200}

A proof of the minor: It is impossible to apprehend one thing relatively to another without apprehending both what is being compared and also what it is being compared to. But to apprehend this to be this (or to apprehend that this is this), is to apprehend *this* relatively, in comparison to *that*. Therefore, anyone who apprehends or assents that things are as a principle signifies, apprehends this to be this. And this is to apprehend the objects of the simple apprehensions from which the principle is composed. Therefore.

A further proof of the same minor:<sup>o</sup> Either an assent corresponding to the principle apprehends the terms (and then I have my conclusion) or it does not. [Suppose it does not.] On the contrary,<sup>23</sup> God cannot take an act directed at some object and split off the basis (*ratio*) by which it is formally directed at that object. For instance, if one sees a wall through its color as the formal basis, then it is impossible for the apprehension of the color to be split off, while one continues to see the wall. The same goes for choosing the means to an end and intending the end. But the formal basis by which the intellect is directed at the connection between the terms is the terms themselves cognized in their immediate propositions. For we cognize principles insofar as we cognize their terms (*Posterior Analytics* I

<sup>23</sup> The bulk of what follows in this paragraph comes verbatim from Peter Aureol, as translated in Chapter 8, nn.44–45.

[72b23–25]). Therefore, principles are cognized through their terms – that is, things being as the principles and conclusions signify; that is, things being as these signify through their principles; ultimately, things being as the principles signify. Here one might say that cognizing the terms is the efficient cause of cognizing the principle, and that cognizing the premises effectively causes a cognition of the conclusion, leading to an assent that is always uniform (that is, that things are as the conclusion signifies). An objection in the first article [§6 n.3.2] was understood in this way.

On the contrary: Although that reply is true for a cognition by which the terms are cognized separately, and likewise for a cognition by which the principles are cognized separately, it is nevertheless also the case that the cognition that signifies the connection between the terms of the principle (that is, that things are as the principle signifies) is also a cognition of the terms. For it is a contradiction to assent that *a* is *b* without apprehending both *a* and *b*. But there is no contradiction in there being an assent and its being conserved without any simple cognitions causing an assent at the same time as the proposition. Therefore the assent that *a* is *b* is to apprehend *a* and *b*.

The minor is clear, because God can conserve and be the cause of any absolute thing that is really and totally distinct from another absolute thing, without the other's existence. But that assent is something absolute, distinct {201} from the simple cognitions and from the proposition. (This must be your view: For otherwise you would not posit that they effectively cause that assent.) Therefore. Proof: That [major premise is *a*] commonly accepted theological dictum. Also, nothing absolute depends on another more than an accident depends on a subject. But in the Eucharist, God makes an accident without a subject. Therefore.

2. God can do whatever does not contain a contradiction. This is clear through the article on omnipotence<sup>24</sup> and *because no word will be impossible* for him [Luke 1:37]. But it is not a contradiction for any absolute thing that is really and totally distinct from another to have existence without that other (unless the other is God, since it would be a contradiction for something to exist without God).

Proof of the minor: It does not seem contradictory for something to exist without all the other things on which it does not necessarily depend causally in some way. But this is the case for every absolute thing with

<sup>24</sup> That is, through the first sentence of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father omnipotent."

respect to another absolute and totally distinct thing (except with respect to God).

As a [second] proof [of this minor] there is another commonly accepted theological principle, that God can supply all extrinsic causality. Therefore, he can maintain any absolute effect in the absence of any other absolute thing. He can also make form without matter, just as much as accident without subject, and conversely he can equally make matter without its form: both because matter is more independent from form than vice versa, since it is naturally found without form but not vice versa; and because for three days he made his [Christ's] body exist without its soul. Therefore, God can make an assent that corresponds to a principle without the principle and an apprehension of the terms. But he cannot make a person assent that this is this without apprehending this and this. Therefore, the assent is the apprehension of each. And the same argument holds for an act of knowledge with respect to its premises. Therefore.

3. Anyone who clearly cognizes and knows some connection (that is, a match or identity of the thing signified by the predicate with the thing signified by the subject, or vice versa) cognizes that this connection is necessary, and that it is impossible for it to be otherwise. But this occurs only through apprehending the terms, because the connection derives its necessity, both in reality and as it is cognized, from the nature of the terms. For the necessity of a relation stems from the nature or condition of its end-terms. Therefore one cannot evidently cognize that *a* is necessarily *b* without cognizing *a* and *b*. Therefore.<sup>25</sup>

4. Things being as the conclusion signifies depends on their being as the premises signify. This is so for their existence, and, therefore, for their cognized existence, because {202} (according to *Metaphysics* II [993b30–31]) each and every thing is related to being as it is related to truth and knowability.

5. The end and the means to the end are related to goodness and appetite just as principles and their conclusion are related to truth (that is, to cognizability) and intellect, as is clear from *Physics* II [200a15–30]. But the means to an end, considered as such, have the goodness that makes

<sup>25</sup> One might take the arguments I've labeled nn.2–3 as further arguments for the minor premise in n.1, rather than as new arguments for the same conclusion reached in n.1. The Latin suggests the latter, but isn't entirely clear.

This third argument closely follows an argument in Aureol, translated earlier in Chapter 8, n.46. The following eight arguments (nn.4–11) are inspired by, and in places taken verbatim from, elsewhere in Aureol's *Sentences* commentary: Bk. I prooem. sec. 4 art. 1 nn.42–47.

them desirable to a morally good appetite (not only extrinsic but also intrinsic goodness) only on account of the end or in comparison to that end. Therefore, conclusions have an evidently cognizable truth only through acts [of intellect] apprehending them (that is, the things signified by them) in comparison to their principles. But to apprehend in this way is to apprehend the principles themselves (that is, the things signified by the principles). Therefore.

6. An intellect apprehending that things are just as a proposition signifies knows evidently that this is so either from the nature of the terms as they are joined, or from the weight of its own nature. If the first then the conclusion would be [its own] principle. The second is not true, because it knows the principle only if necessitated to assent by something else – for instance, a cognition of the terms and their being joined. Therefore, when the intellect evidently cognizes a conclusion in the way in question, it must always be fixed on things being just as the principles signify. Otherwise, the evidentness that things are as the conclusion signifies would be lost.

7. It is impossible to cognize evidently solely through the intellect's being drawn simply to the conclusion. Therefore, whenever a thing is evidently cognized with the utmost intrinsic evidentness, this will be by apprehending and cognizing it in comparison to its premises (that is, to the things signified by those premises). And thus we have our conclusion, that {203} an act will count as knowledge only by apprehending the conclusion in relation to its principle, not by simply stopping at the conclusion.

8. The sign of someone who knows is being able to teach as well.<sup>26</sup> But someone who knows simply the conclusion alone, not in comparison to its principles, cannot teach that conclusion. Therefore. Thus one commonly asks of someone who cognizes that things are as the conclusion designates: Whence does he know that this is so? This suggests that to know just is to cognize the cause of why things are. As *Posterior Analytics* I [71b9–12] says, we are held to know a thing when we cognize its cause: that it is so, and that it cannot be otherwise.

9. Here is a proof that the intellect is drawn to the principles and the conclusion by the same simple intention. For it is no more the case that the truth of a conclusion is evidently cognizable without an apprehension of the things signified by the principles (or without any relation to the

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I 1, 981b7.

principles), than that a bitter medicine designed to bring health is desirable in its own right, without health's being desired. But one is not drawn to the bitter medicine, or at least one need not be drawn to it when one is. Likewise, then, from the other side, there is desire only to the extent that it is joined with health. Therefore.

10. Knowing, for the intellect, is what choosing is, for the will (according to *Physics* II [200a15–16]). But a simple act of choice encompasses the means to the end, for the sake of the end, and can encompass both. Therefore, knowing also encompasses each truth at the same time, principle and conclusion.

11. The act by which one cognizes that this is because of this, or that this is the cause that this is, covers both at the same time. But the act of knowing is of this sort, by definition [see n.8]. Therefore.

12. It was established earlier [§4A n.3] that every evident assent is an apprehension of all the things cognized through the complex and incomplete apprehensions that necessitate the assent. But knowing is an evident assent. Therefore.

13. To know is a single act such that, when it informs the soul, putting everything else aside, it is a contradiction for the soul not to know. But there is no such act except one that encompasses the things signified by both the conclusion and the premises. For otherwise it would not be evident to the soul that things are as the conclusion signifies. Therefore, etc. {204}

### [§13. *That Knowledge Concerns Only the Conclusion*]

1. For the opposite side I argue first as follows: The dispositional cognition of a principle suffices for knowledge of a conclusion (that is, that things are as the conclusion signifies). Therefore, the cognition involved in an act of knowledge is not the actual cognition that things are as the principles signify.

I prove the premise: for otherwise it would be impossible to cognize the thirtieth conclusion of Book I of [Euclid's] *Geometry* without actually cognizing that things are as all the preceding conclusions signify. (The posterior of these conclusions always presupposes those that precede it.) But this would be impossible, as experience shows. Indeed, this would certainly detract from the various branches of knowledge, the conclusions of which presuppose (as the Bishop of Lincoln says<sup>27</sup>) that the posterior

<sup>27</sup> Robert Grosseteste, *Commentarius in Posteriorum analyticorum libros I.2* (pp. 101–2).

conclusions are evidently known. Therefore, it seems that what suffices for the actual knowledge of any conclusion is to cognize solely that conclusion, but with a dispositional cognition of the principles, through which the conclusion could be analyzed into its principles and derived from them.

2. Someone can assent that things are as the conclusion signifies, on account of evidently assenting that things are as the principles signify, without that assent's extending (*feratur*) to the principles. Indeed, someone can do this no less firmly than someone can, on account of loving an end, induce the love of some means to that end, without through that love loving the end. But one can do this. For someone is not drawn by love to an end without apprehending the end. But we experience {205} that often, after someone's love has caused in him the love of his neighbor, he wants to do many things for his neighbor and benevolently initiates many acts on that person's behalf, without thinking about God and, therefore, not actually loving God. Therefore.

3. One experiences that after some conclusion to which one assents has been established through many different arguments (*a priori* and *a posteriori*, through experience and through its cause, through various experiences and various causes): one assents more than before, and more firmly, but without at the same time thinking that things are as all those arguments signify. Therefore, one's assent is firmer than before, extending only to that conclusion. For an assent caused by the evidence of one syllogism is intensified by another. This could not be if they were not of the same species, and they would not be of the same species if each one extended to an object of a different species. But they would extend to objects of different species if they were to encompass things being as is signified by the principle from which they derive their conclusion. Therefore.

4. There is no contradiction in causes of different species being able to cause effects of the same species. Therefore, there is no apparent contradiction that would prevent syllogistic evidence or other evidence suited to cause knowledge from causing knowledge of the same species. The assumption is clear, because we experience that both the sun and fire cause the same kind of heat, and the same holds in many other cases.

5. God and nature do nothing that is pointless, according to the Philosopher.<sup>28</sup> But it would be pointless to apprehend evidently through the principles themselves, formally, that things are as the principles signify and

<sup>28</sup> See, e.g., *De caelo* I 4, 271a33. The argument that follows is obscure, and the Latin is dubious. Perhaps Wodeham is thinking of a case like those in the previous two paragraphs, where the same conclusion is grasped via two different arguments.

at the same time to apprehend again through another act that things are as those [principles] signify. Yet this would follow since, according to the claim in question, syllogistic evidence necessitates such an assent and causes it. But nothing is the active efficient cause of something, except while it exists. Therefore.

6. We never find ourselves assenting except on the basis of some prior apprehension. But often, when we have once had demonstrative evidence that things are so and then later we form the conclusion alone, we immediately assent that things are as the conclusion<sup>o</sup> signifies. This assent has no temporally prior apprehension that things are as the principles signify. Therefore, it does not extend to things being as the principles signify. For to say that without any prior apprehension one initiates an act of assenting that things are so is equivalent to saying that one initiates an act of assenting that things are so or so without the person's apprehending that they are so or so. And this is as much as to say that I now begin to initiate an act of assenting that things are as the principles signify without my now apprehending that things are as they signify. {206}

[§14. *Wodeham's View*]

It now remains to establish what ought to be said in this article. First, I make a distinction regarding the act of knowledge, which can be taken in one way for an evident judgment such that, when it is posited in the soul with everything really distinct set aside, it is a contradiction for the soul not to assent evidently that things are as the conclusion signifies. In another way it can be taken for every act by which the soul assents firmly and without hesitation that things are as the conclusion signifies, and in such a way that that assent either is evident or has an evident act attached to it regarding that same conclusion.

I likewise make a distinction regarding knowing. Knowing can be taken either for an act that is simple in being, or for many acts at once such that, were they posited all at once in the soul, the soul would be certain that things are as the conclusion signifies, even if there is no one act through which it has certain evidentness.

1. With these distinctions in mind, my first conclusion is that an act of knowledge spoken of in the first way never has as its object solely and totally that things are as the conclusion signifies. Almost all the first set of arguments [§12] yield this conclusion, although the fourth is not evident to me. And those concerning the desirable and choiceworthy [nn.5,9,10]

are sound when consistently understood in this sense: that the act of initiation (given which, when posited in the soul, it would be a contradiction for the soul not to initiate the act virtuously) encompasses the end – assuming there is such [an end].

2. Second conclusion. Some acts of knowledge evident in this [first] way are solely direct acts, and hence do not encompass any act of the soul. An evident act necessitated by demonstrative evidence is of this sort: No part of it signifies any act of the soul, but only external things. For every demonstration composed of evident premises in the way repeatedly explained is naturally suited, when one assents to the corresponding principles, to necessitate the intellect to an act of knowledge evident in such a way that, if it were posited in the soul with everything else set aside, it would be evident to the soul that things are as the conclusion signifies. But every assent naturally suited to be necessitated by such a demonstration without any further reflexive apprehension is a direct act. Therefore.

3. Third conclusion. Some assents by which one evidently assents that things are as the conclusion signifies are reflexive acts. For every assent {207} evident in this way has for its total object all the things apprehended through the apprehended evidence that necessitates and is required for such an assent. But some such things are reflexive acts – that is, acts that have an act of the soul for their object. Therefore.

The minor is proved, because those premises concluding that things are as the direct conclusion signifies are evident in the following way: It is necessarily the case that, if I have evidently assented that things are so, then I am necessitated to assent that things are so, by demonstrative evidence or at least by evidence necessitating an assent that things are so. So, necessarily, a triangle has three, etc. That assent, if it is to be an evident act of knowledge in the first way, necessarily encompasses the things signified by the premises of that syllogism [see n. 1]. So it will be a reflexive act. Therefore, etc.

Also, one who assents that things are so might argue still more evidently: It is necessarily the case that I have the knowledge, habitually, to show how a thing is so, through propositions known per se, analyzing [the conclusion] into them. But a triangle's having three is of this sort. Therefore.

4. The fourth conclusion is that some acts of knowledge taken in the second way extend solely to the conclusion. For if I have in advance an assent caused by this demonstrative syllogism:



Every  $a$  is  $b$ ;  
 Every  $c$  is  $a$ ;  
 Therefore,  
 Every  $c$  is  $b$

I can immediately argue as follows: Every  $c$  is  $b$ , because every  $a$  is  $b$  and every  $c$  is  $a$ . Likewise it follows: This is this, because that is that. Therefore, this is this. And I will firmly assent to the conclusion through an absolute act, if I want to, because I hold that the first such absolute act lies under my control just as an act of believing does. Thus the evidentness will not come from that act formally, but the firmness<sup>o</sup> of its adherence will, whereas its being evident comes from the premises, or from an act of knowledge that is evident in the first way. Therefore, it will not be evident through any intrinsic evidentness but through extrinsic denomination, because with other things set aside, although the firmness of its adherence would remain, it would do so without being evident.

5. The fifth conclusion is that the evidence by which the geometer evidently assents to the thirtieth conclusion without apprehending that things are as the prior conclusions signify [§13 n.1] is not solely a direct assent but a reflexive one, having an act of the soul as its object – having as its object, for instance, the memory<sup>o</sup> that by beginning from things known per se he has deduced in turn every conclusion up to the one to which he now assents. This would be in effect to argue as follows: Nothing follows syllogistically, directly or indirectly, from principles known per se except for what is true. But a triangle's having three etc. is of this sort. Therefore. The major is evident logically and the minor experientially, to memory; therefore, the conclusion holds. And it further follows: A triangle's having three is true; therefore, a triangle [has three], etc. – these {208} are convertible.

Other conclusions could be advanced, and objections against them resolved, but for now I omit them.

To the arguments on each side it is clear that the first set [§12] goes through and many of them reach true conclusions regarding the act of knowledge taken in the first way. Some on the opposite side [§13] also reach true conclusions. Which ones do, and how they do, is clear by comparing them to the conclusions just stated.

[§15. *Reply to the Initial Arguments*]

With respect to the principal arguments of the question [§1], I grant the first in this sense: that an act of knowledge has as its object things being in reality as the conclusion signifies. Its object is not just the thing signified by the subject of the conclusion.

To the second, I grant that real knowledge has as its object things being so in reality, not just the signs of things.

To the first on the other side, the authorities were calling "knowledge of the conclusion" the knowledge that things are as the conclusion signifies. And the same holds true for understanding a principle.

To the second, being as the conclusion signifies is true by extrinsic denomination, through an act of the soul. But the conclusion is what is true, formally speaking, even though the conclusion is not being in reality as it signifies.