Antoine Côté

The *Summa Halensis* on Whether Universal and Particular Are Said of God¹

Abstract: This paper examines the *Summa Halensis*' theory of universals. I first try to tease out that theory from the *Summa*'s answer to the question of whether the Persons of the Trinity are related to the divine essence as species is related to genus or particulars to species. I then briefly discuss the philosophical interest of the *Summa*'s position by drawing attention to some significant parallels between it and one version of twentieth-century trope theory. I conclude by comparing the *Summa*'s treatment of universals with that of other early Franciscans discussions.

This paper has a rather narrow focus, namely the *Summa Halensis*' treatment of the question of 'whether the notions of universal and particular apply to divine matters', which covers six columns of text in the critical edition.² It is a question we find in the commentaries on the *Sentences* and *Quaestiones* of many scholastic authors, including those of many early Franciscans, in no small part because it had been touched upon by Peter Lombard in Distinction 19 of Book 1 of the *Sentences*. It is a question we expect to find in a systematic treatise on theology such as the *Summa*, and in particular in the section of it dealing with divine names in general. At issue is whether it is correct to think of the relation of the Persons of the Trinity to the divine essence as the relation of species to genus or of particulars to species. The scholastics tend to agree that the answer is no; and the *Summa* is no exception. What we will want to know is 1. why the *Summa* endorses this position, and what this tells us about its conception of universals and particulars in general, 2. what the philosophical interest of their position is, and 3. how their position compares to that of other early Franciscans.

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² Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica (SH)* (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924–48), Vol I, P2, In1, Tr1, Q2, C1 (n. 337), pp. 498–501.

The *Summa* on ‘whether the notions of universal and particular apply to divine matters’

The Case Against There Being Universals in God

Our author (or, more precisely, the author of this section of the *Summa*) is very clear right from the outset: there are no universals or particulars in God, or rather, as they put it, there is no universal or particular being in God.³ But things are a little more complicated than this statement suggests. Our author invokes the principle that God has all perfections and no imperfections and asserts that God will possess ‘whatever relates to perfection’ in universal and particular being. In order to determine whether anything does, we first need a definition of what a universal is. The *Summa* settles on the definition of the universal as ‘what is in many and of many’. This is a common definition in the Middle Ages. Many scholastics, e.g. Albert the Great and Nicholas of Cornwall, attribute it to Avicenna;⁴ the *Summa* attributes it to Aristotle.⁵ What does the *Summa* mean by a universal being of many and in many? To say that a universal is ‘of many’ is just a way of saying that a universal term (though, the *Summa* never talks about universal ‘terms’) is predicable of many subjects, following Aristotle in the *Categories*. To say that a universal is in many, however, can mean two very different things according to the *Summa*. It can either be in many in such a way that it is numerically the same universal in the many things in which it exists (*communis eo quod ipsa manet una et eadem numero, non divisa in illis*⁶); or it can be in many in such a way that it is multiplied according to the number of things in which it exists. What the *Summa* wants to establish is whether the divine essence is a universal in one of the three ways I have just mentioned: by being said of many, by being in

³ SH I, P2, In1, Tr1, Q2, C1 (n. 337), p. 499.

⁴ Albert the Great, *Peri hermeneias*, l. 1, tr. 5, c. 1, in *B. Alberti Magni Ratisbonensis episcopi, ordinis Praedicatorum, Opera omnia*, vol. 1, ed. Auguste Borgnet (Paris: Vivès, 1890), 413: ‘Universale autem est quod est in multis et de multis suae naturae suppositis: et ideo omnis, et nullus, et huiusmodi signa universalia esse non possunt, sed sunt signa designantia utrum universale sit acceptum universaliter vel particulariter secundum sua supposita: et haec sunt verba Avicennae’ [The universal is what is in many and of many suppositis belonging to its nature. Hence ‘all’ and ‘no’ and other such signs cannot be universals, rather they are signs indicating whether the universal is taken universally or particularly following its suppositis. Those are the words of Avicenna]. Nicholas of Cornwall, *Notule super librum Porfirii* (Oxford, Corpus Christi College E 293B, fol. 71ra): ‘Dico quod hoc est huiusmodi cuius ratio non prohibet dici de multis et esse in multis, et hoc est esse uniuersale secundum Auiscennam’ [I say that this is such that its nature does not prohibit its being said of many and being in many, and that is to be a universal according to Avicenna]. Cited by Patrick Osmund Lewry, ‘Oxford Logic 1250–1275: Nicholas and Peter of Cornwall on Past and Future Realities,’ in *The Rise of British Logic*, ed. Patrick Osmund Lewry, Papers in Medieval Studies, 7 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1983), 37.

⁵ SH I, P2, In1, Tr1, Q2, C1 (n. 337), p. 499.

⁶ SH I, P2, In2, Tr2, S1, Q1, C2 (n. 386), p. 569.

many in the multiplied sense, or by being in many in the non-multiplied sense; and the answer will depend on whether one of these three sorts of universal in any way ‘pertains to perfection’. The *Summa*’s thesis is going to be that being said of many (as of ‘man’ in ‘Socrates is man’) is always a sign of imperfection and thus cannot apply to God, while being in many *in the non-multiplied* sense is always a sign of perfection, and so must belong to God.

Why is being said of many a sign of imperfection? Because our author believes that a predicate that does not express the whole of the subjects of which it is predicated must be an imperfect predicate (though he uses those very words). Thus the predicate ‘man’ in the proposition ‘Socrates is man’ is truly said of Socrates, but it does not express the totality of what makes up Socrates, ‘his quantity, qualities and actions, which are nonetheless part of Socrates’ being’. Hence ‘man’ must be an imperfect predicate; and its being said of Socrates must be a sign of imperfection. By contrast, in ‘The Father is God’, ‘The Son is God’, and ‘The Holy Spirit is God’, the term ‘God’ refers to the whole being of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Spirit. ‘God’ is thus not said ‘of many’, and so is not an imperfection.

But why now is being in many (in the non-multiplied way) a sign of perfection? First of all to be *in* anything even if only one thing, is a perfection. The reasoning is as follows. First, ‘something that is only in one thing’ for the *Summa* is just another name for a particular; and a particular is said to be perfect because it signifies the ‘whole being’. (*Nobilius et perfectius est esse non de multis quam quod est esse de multis: quia cum dico ‘de’ dico partem, non totum.*⁷) If we take ‘Socrates is Socrates’ as an example, the *Summa* might be saying that ‘Socrates’ is ‘in’ Socrates as opposed to being said of him because the predicate ‘Socrates’ is true of the whole Socrates, not just true of a part of him. However, while to be in one thing is a perfection, to be in *only* one thing is an imperfection, the *Summa* tells us, because ‘it is more noble to be [in the non-multiplied way] in many than to be in only one thing’. It is unfortunate that the *Summa* offers no justification for the principle that it is nobler to be (in the non-multiplied way) in many than to be in only one thing, and advances no arguments to forestall predictable objections. If I know of a foolproof way of hacking into another person’s life savings, it is presumably not nobler for that knowledge to be shared, ‘to be in many’, rather than just in one. Of course, what the *Summa* means is probably that it is nobler for something *good* to be in many rather than in just one. But even that admits of counter-examples. On the other hand, if we do accept the principle, then God’s being in three Persons verifies it, since the divine essence is then ‘in many’. Of course we would then need to have arguments for why three is just the right ‘many’. Although our author does not supply these in his discussion of universals, he (or one of his collaborators) does (as most scholastic theologians do) have arguments elsewhere in the *Summa* to show that the number of Persons in which the divine unity can exist indivisibly can be (A) neither fewer than

7 SH I, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M2, C1 (n. 76), p. 122.

three (*non potest esse in paucioribus quam in tribus personis*⁸), nor (B) greater (*si ergo ponitur summa diffusio, erit ipsam ponere in tribus personis tantum*⁹). If we accept these, then the undivided existence of the one divine essence in three (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) is the noblest way for something to be numerically identical in many.

In sum, because being in many is one way of being a universal—since created universals are in many, though dividedly—and because God is in many, though undividedly, then although God cannot be said to be universal, there is nonetheless, as the *Summa* puts it, something of the perfection of a universal in God.

The Case Against There Being Particulars in God

Having established that there are no non-multiplied universals in God, the *Summa* then sets out to prove that there are no particulars in God. The proof proceeds by distinguishing the different possible ways in which something can be particularized and by showing that none belongs to God.

Drawing from Boethius' *De trinitate*, the *Summa* asserts that there are three ways in which something can be singularized or individualized: through matter, through accidents, and through a 'signate and singularized form' (*a forma signata et singulari*).¹⁰ The *Summa*, predictably, explains that there are no particulars in God in the first two senses—since there are clearly neither matter nor accidents in God. It also argues that there are no particulars in the third sense. Their discussion here deserves close attention.

In the third way, as Boethius says, when "man" is said, it is predicated of many men; but if we attend to that humanity that is in the individual Socrates, it [i.e. the humanity] becomes individual, since Socrates himself is individual and singular. Whence it follows that just as Socrates and Cicero are cognized as singulars and are numerically many through their singular properties and singular accidents, so too they are made many through their proper individual and singular humanities.¹¹

⁸ SH I, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, Ti2, C1 (n. 304), p. 439.

⁹ SH I, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, Ti2, C1 (n. 304), p. 440.

¹⁰ The phrase 'forma signata' is a *hapax* in the *Summa*. The use of *signat** and cognates to express the idea of determination and particularity appears to have originated in Avicenna. On this matter, see Marie-Dominique Roland-Gosselin's classic *Le "De ente et essentia" de S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Le Saulchoir, Kain: Revue des Sciences théologiques et philosophiques, 1926), esp. ch. 3.

¹¹ SH I, P2, In1, Tr1, Q2, C1 (n. 337), p. 500: 'Tertio modo, sicut dicit Boethius, cum 'homo' dicitur, de pluribus quidem hominibus praedicatur; sed si illam humanitatem, quae est in Socrate individuo, consideremus, fit individua, cum Socrates ipse sit individuus et singularis. Ex quo accipitur quod sicut Socrates et Cicero suis singularibus proprietatibus et accidentibus singulares et numero plures cognoscuntur, sic suis propriis individuis et singularibus humanitatibus numero plures efficiuntur.'

It is important to note that for it to make sense for the *Summa* to introduce signate forms (which I will take to mean the same thing as instantiated universals) as a third kind of agent of particularity, these forms must be particular independently from the particularity they get from the accidents or the matter, i.e. ‘ways’ 1 and 2. It cannot be the case that what the *Summa* means by the third sense of particular is that something becomes a signate form *by virtue* of its being received into this or that portion of space or into these or those accidents; for then the third sense would collapse into the other two. An historical example of the sort of thing I believe the *Summa* is ruling out by introducing this third sense of particularity would be William of Champeaux’s (one of the nominalists’ favourite punching bags) theory of material essence criticized by Abelard in his *Glosses on Porphyry*. Here is a brief statement of the position by Abelard (keep in mind that ‘matter’ and ‘form’ mean roughly the opposite of what they mean for a scholastic):

Some people take “universal thing” in such a way that they set up essentially the same substance in things diverse from one another through forms. This substance is the “material essence” of the singulars it is in. It is one in itself, and diverse only through the forms of the inferiors (*in se ipsa una, tantum per formas inferiorum sit diuersa*).¹²

Assuming here William means by ‘forms of the inferiors’ something like ‘accidental forms’, then he is saying that the *only* thing that makes the material essence this material essence as opposed to that material essence is that it is received in these accidental forms as opposed to those: take those forms away, and what is left is the self-same ‘universal thing’. This, I contend, cannot be what the *Summa* believes signate forms are if these are to represent a *bona fide* third way of being particular. They must be particular in a different way. I can think of two ways: (A) a signate form is different from every other co-specific signate form in and of itself; or (B) a signate form is different from every other co-specific signate form by *acquiring* some difference as a result of its ‘reception’ in or its association with, accidents and matter (like two pairs of the same make of shoe acquire different particular shapes as a consequence of the gait, stride, weight and shape of feet of the person wearing them). The texts seem to support (A). For instance:

Just as Socrates and Cicero are cognized as singulars and are numerically many through their singular properties and singular accidents, so too they are made many through their proper individual and singular humanities.¹³

¹² Peter Abelard, ‘From the “Glosses on Porphyry” in His *Logica ‘ingredientibus’,* in *Five Texts on the Medieval Problem of Universals*, trans. and ed. Paul Vincent Spade (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 29. The italics from Spade’s translation have been removed.

¹³ *SH* I, P2, In1, Tr1, Q2, C1 (n. 337), p. 500: ‘Sicut Socrates et Cicero suis singularibus proprietatibus et accidentibus singulares et numero plures cognoscuntur, sic suis propriis individuus et singularibus humanitatibus numero plures efficiuntur.’

Or take the following passage from the treatise on Personal names taken absolutely:

Rather, other is the commonality of essence, other that of relation. For the essence is common because it itself remains numerically the same, undivided in them <i.e. the Persons>. Hence its commonality is not the commonality of the universal. However the distinctness or incommunicability is common more in the way of the universal: for the distinctness is not the same in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; rather other is the Father's, other the Son's. That commonality is multiplied and numbered, not the remaining one.¹⁴

Let us examine this passage a little more closely. The author starts out by rehearsing the difference between the commonality of the divine essence and the commonality of a universal: the essence is common by virtue of the fact that it is *ea ipsa in multis*, whereas the universal is common in division. Evidently these are two radically different types of commonality, and if to be universal is to be common in the second sense, then there will no universality in God, which is exactly what the *Summa* believes. But then the author immediately adds that there is some analogue of universality in God after all, except that one should not look for it in the divine essence but rather in the distinctness or incommunicability of *Persons* ('However the distinctness or incommunicability is common more in the way of the universal.'). But how can *distinctness* be an analogue of universality? What the *Summa* means here is simply that the predicate 'distinct' can be applied to each Person: 'The Father is distinct from the Son', 'The Father is distinct from the Holy Ghost', etc., just like any *bona fide* universal term. The crucial point our Summists want to make is that what makes each Person distinct from the other two is, well, *distinct* in each Person: *alia Patris, alia Filii*; and since there is supposed to be an analogy between distinctness in God and universals in creatures, the inference we are supposed to draw is that the universal 'man', which is predicable of Socrates and Plato, is also *other* in Socrates and *other* in Plato. Actually, we don't even need to draw the inference ourselves, the *Summa* does it for us in the following text:

To the first objection I reply in accordance with the following rule: there is no place for a distinction where union is not taken from diverse causes. For instance, humanity in Socrates and Plato <come> from diverse causes; whence I can say that Socrates is another man from Plato, for the ratio by which Socrates is a man is other than that by which Plato is a man, for other is the humanity of Socrates, other that of Plato.¹⁵

14 *SH* I, P2, In2, Tr2, S1, Q1, M1, C2 (n. 386), p. 569: 'Sed essentia aliter est communis, aliter relatio; essentia enim communis est eo quod ipsa manet una et eadem numero, non divisa in illis: unde communitas sua non est communitas universalis. Distinctio vero sive incommunicabilitas communis est magis per modum universalis; non enim est distinctio eadem in Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto, sed alia Patris, alia Filii: hoc enim commune multiplicatur et numeratur, reliquum non sic.' See also *SH* I, P2, In2, Tr2, S1, Q1, M1, C5 (n. 390), p. 574.

15 *SH* I, P2, In2, Tr1, Q2, M3, C2, Ar2 (n. 360), p. 538: 'Ad primum secundum hanc regulam: non habet locum distinctio ubi non est ex diversis causis unio. Verbi gratia, humanitas est in Sorte et Platone ex

The point is made yet again, in slightly different terms, in the treatise on divine unity. The question at issue there is whether divine unity is compatible with the having of a plurality of natures. The answer is that it is not. But this requires some argument, the *Summa* realizes, since one of the ways we know that two things have different natures is that predicates apply to one that do not apply to the other; but of course different predicates *do* apply to the different Persons of the Trinity, though they all have the same nature. For instance, the predicate, ‘not being from another’ is true of the Father, while ‘being from another’ is true of the Son. The exact details of the *Summa*’s reply need not concern us. What is worth noting is the conclusion of that reply, to the effect that certain inferences are warranted *in divinis* that are not in the case of creatures.

And thus, as Boethius says, the following inference is valid: “the Father is God, the Son is God, therefore they are one God”; but the following one is not: “Socrates is a man, Plato is a man, therefore they are one man.” Because therefore in God, or in the Father and the Son, one does not find a different form, as in Socrates and Plato, the argument is without basis.¹⁶

It seems pretty clear, then, that the *Summa* considers each signate form to be somehow different from, other than, all other co-specific signate forms. But of course this might raise a problem: if this humanity is distinct from that humanity, and so on with other humanities, then there is no universal at all, since a universal should be or express a unity. The Platonic realist has a ready answer to this: he locates the unity in the one uninstantiated real universal in which all the instantiated universals participate or which they imitate. But the *Summa* explicitly rules out this possibility:

The universal form does not exist separately; rather it depends on the first (substances); whence, once the first substances are destroyed, it is impossible that any of the others remain. The universal depends for its existence on the singulars.¹⁷

As far as the authors of the *Summa* are concerned, when it comes to humanity (or any other universal), all there is is this humanity and/or that humanity, etc. Yet the *Summa* denies that this fact robs universals of all real unity: universals qua instan-

diversis causis; unde possum dicere quod Sortes est alius homo a Platone, quia alia est ratio qua Sortes est homo et alia qua Plato est homo, quia alia est humanitas Sortis, alia humanitas Platonis.’
16 SH I, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M2, C2 (n. 77), p. 125: ‘Et ideo, sicut dicit Boethius, sequitur: “Pater est Deus, Filius est Deus, ergo sunt unus Deus”; sed non sequitur: “Sortes est homo, Plato est homo, ergo sunt unus homo.” Quia ergo in Deo, sive in Patre et Filio, non invenitur differens forma, sicut in Sorte et Platone, non habet ibi locum ratio.’

17 SH I, P1, In1, Tr2, Q3, Ti2, C5 (n. 44), p. 69: ‘Forma enim universalis non habet esse per se nec separatum, immo dependens a primis: unde, destructis primis, impossibile est aliquid aliorum remanere; et ita secundum actum existendi dependet a singularibus universale.’

tiated, qua signate forms, *do* possess or display a unity; it might not be as perfect as the unity displayed by the divine essence, but it *is*, the *Summa* assures us, a unity.

For since the essence in those Persons is the same and is absolutely simple, and is not multiplied following their multiplication, clearly in it (sc. the essence) is a great and the highest perfection of unity. Hence the unity of the essential universal falls short of the unity of the first essence in that although both essences are in many, the universal essence is in many in such a way that it is multiplied and numbered by them.¹⁸

The same point is made in more striking terms in the treatise on Personal names taken absolutely. There the *Summa* is trying to answer the question of whether the fact that the divine Persons should be called three ‘things of nature’ (*res naturae*)—as the *Summa* thinks they should—entails that there are three things (*tres res*) in God. The *Summa* wants to answer that this consequence does indeed follow, provided the term ‘thing’ is taken personally, not essentially.¹⁹ But the author then has to show how this answer is compatible with an assertion by John of Damascus to the effect that whereas in creation there are real differences and rational commonalities, in God there are only rational distinctions and a real commonality, a contention that seems to entail that there are no things, no *res*, in God (assuming here that only particulars can be *res*). Here is the objection:

Again, Damascene [writes that]: “it is one thing to consider [something to be] in reality, and another to consider [it to be] in reason”; and he says that those [two types of consideration] are used in opposite ways of creatures and God. For in creatures difference is considered [to be] in reality, for Peter is really different from Paul; the commonality, however, is considered [to be] in reason only. However, in God, it is the opposite: the commonality or unity are considered [to be] in reality, difference in reason.²⁰

18 SH I, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M3, C2 (n. 83), p. 134: ‘Nam cum eadem sit essentia et omnino simplex in istis personis, non multiplicata secundum multiplicationem earum, patet quod in ipsa est magna et summa perfectio unitatis. Unde in hoc deficit unitas essentiae universalis ab unitate essentiae primae, quia licet utraque sit in pluribus, tamen essentia universalis ita est in pluribus quod multiplicatur et numeratur per illa.’

19 It is worth mentioning that the *Summa*’s view of *res* as applying to the divine Persons is diametrically opposed to the influential view espoused more than a century earlier by Stephen Langton, according to whom ‘res’ can be said of the Godhead, not of the Persons. I am grateful to Marcia Colish for drawing my attention to this point and to the following excellent article by Luisa Valente, ‘Logique et théologie trinitaire chez Étienne Langton: *Res, ens, suppositio communis, et propositio duplex*,’ in *Étienne Langton: Prédicateur, bibliste, théologien*, ed. Jean-Louis Bataillon, Nicole Bériou, Gilbert Dahan, and Riccardo Quinto (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 563–86, esp. 570–4.

20 SH I, P2, In2, Tr2, S1, Q1, M3, C7 (n. 404), p. 595: ‘Item, Damascenus: “Aliud est considerare re, aliud ratione”; et dicit quod ista e contrario se habent in creaturis et divinis. In creaturis enim differentia re reconsideratur: differunt enim secundum rem Petrus et Paulus; communitas vero ratione consideratur; in divinis autem e converso: communitas sive unitas re consideratur, differentia ratione (...).’

The *Summa* finds nothing objectionable in John's distinction of two types of consideration, as long as it is understood that the *ratio* in question is not a pure figment of the mind, but is caused by both the extra-mental thing and the intellect,

And reason, which is not empty, is not wholly caused by the intellect, but (also) by the thing.²¹

Thus, when John says that commonalities in creatures are considered 'in reason', the *Summa* is telling us, this ought not to be taken to mean that commonalities are entirely mind-dependent: the commonality is 'out there', the *Summa* assures us, but it is—note the choice of words—'diminished':

When Damascene says that in creatures difference is considered [to be] in reality whereas commonality [is considered to be] in reason, it is not being said that commonality is considered [to be] in reason because there is no real commonality, but because there [i.e. in creatures] the commonality according to the thing is diminished, whereas the difference is perfected. Hence it follows that if creatures differ numerically they differ simpliciter, but it does not follow that if creatures differ numerically, they differ simpliciter. However it does not follow that because they are generically and specifically one, then they are one. It is for this reason, therefore, that it is said that their commonality is not considered [to be] in reality.²²

The authors of the *Summa*, then, are very clear: there is a real unity in the diverse humanities. It might be a diminished unity, but it is a unity all the same. Thus, the difficulty mentioned above, namely that the existence of a plurality of 'different' instantiations of the same universal would prohibit the existence of any real unity, is forcefully rejected by the *Summa*: it is possible *in creatis* for signate singulars (particular instantiations of a universal) to enjoy a particular kind of unity, diminished unity. But then, if this is so, we see at once why 'particular' in this third sense cannot apply to God, since the unity of the divine essence must be a perfect, non-diminished, unity. The *Summa* has now shown that none of the three ways of being particular applies to God, and so can conclude that there is no particularity in God. QED.

To sum up: a universal *in creatis* is something that is said of many and is in many *in the multiplied sense*. A universal *in divinis* is not said of many but is identically in many, in fact in three, in the non-multiplied sense. There are no particulars in God because God is devoid of matter, accidents and singular forms. But the Persons are 'individual' in some sense. So, as the authors put it: 'The divine being is neither

²¹ SH I, P2, In2, Tr2, S1, Q1, M3, C7 (n. 404), p. 595: '[E]t ratio, quae vana non est, non causatur totaliter ab intellectu, sed a re.'

²² SH I, P2, In2, Tr2, S1, Q1, M3, C7 (n. 404), p. 595: 'Cum ergo dicit Damascenus quod in creaturis differentia consideratur re, communitas ratione, non dicitur communitas considerari ratione eo quod non sit aliqua communitas secundum rem, sed quia communitas secundum rem est ibi diminuta, sed differentia perfecta; unde sequitur: "si creaturae differunt numero, quod differunt simpliciter"; sed non sequitur: "sunt unum genere, unum specie, ergo sunt unum"; propter hoc ergo dicitur quod communitas eorum non re consideratur.'

universal nor particular but has something of each.’²³ The author of our question of the *Summa* had denied at the outset that universals or particulars apply to God. We now see in what sense this is true. What he wants to deny applies to God is what Peter Lombard calls the universal ‘according to the philosophers’, the universal that is said of many and is in many in the multiplied sense. That in a nutshell is the *Summa*’s answer to the initial question whether the notions of universal and particular apply to divine matters.

Characterizing the *Summa*’s Position

Now that I have outlined the *Summa*’s answer to the initial question and tried to suss out its understanding of what universals and particulars are, I want to take a step back and very briefly reflect on what kind of theory it is and what interest it holds for the historian. My starting point will be the *Prolegomena* to Volume 2 of the *Summa*, which states that the *Summa* belongs to the ‘moderate realist’ camp.²⁴ For reasons I will indicate below, I don’t think the term ‘moderate’ is very useful or appropriate here, and I am going to suggest something else in its place that I think better captures the nature of the *Summa*’s insight. The term ‘realist’, however, is appropriate, and it unquestionably applies to the *Summa*’s theory of universals. Let us start with that.

Remember that according to the *Summa*’s ‘Aristotelian’ definition, a universal is said of something or is in something. The *Summa* then argues that universals *in creatis* are said of something, and are in something—dividedly, of course—namely in real particulars. But if they are *in* particulars, then they must be real.

The *Summa* also expressly refers to universals as *res*. It does this in connection once again with John of Damascus’ distinction between looking upon something as really existing and looking upon something as being in reason only, a distinction that might be thought to imply that existence in thought is exclusive of real existence. However, this is the wrong inference to draw according to the *Summa*. To properly understand John of Damascus’ position, we need to understand that there are two senses of the term ‘ratio’. It can either signify the mind’s act of gathering and comparing objects, or it can signify that which is received in (or as a result of) the act of gathering. When we say that a universal is a ‘ratio’, we are using ‘ratio’ in the second sense, for the universal is not the operation itself but what is received by the intellect in the process of comparing, and this, we are told, is a *thing*:

²³ SH I, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M2, C1 (n. 76), p. 122: ‘[E]sse divinum non est universale vel singulare, sed habens aliquid de utroque.’

²⁴ ‘Prolegomena ad primum librum Summae Theologicae,’ in Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica*, vol. 2 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1928), L: ‘Ex iis constat Halensem inter realistas moderatos adnumerandum esse’ [Whence it is clear that Alexander of Hales is to be counted among the moderate realists].

To the second argument it must be said that “reason” is said in two ways. In one way it refers to that receiving that is in the act of gathering; in another sense it is said of what is received in the act of gathering. When the intellect receives a thing absolutely, then it is said to understand. But when it receives it in the act of gathering, according as it joins one to the other, then it is called reason. If then we call reason the very motion or receiving of the thing in the act of gathering, that is not how Damascene takes reason, but in the second way. Hence Damascene does not want to say that the divine Persons are considered “in reason” [where “reason” refers to] the motion of the intellect itself or to the receiving in the act of gathering, but rather “in reason” [where “reason” refers to] that which is received by the intellect in the act of gathering. For the universal is received by the intellect in the act of gathering, that is, in many; but that [i.e. the universal] is a thing.²⁵

Ipsum (sc. universale) tamen est res: the universal is a *res*. The point could not be made any more clearly. The *Summa*’s theory, then, is unquestionably a realist one. But what kind of realism?

I have suggested that it wasn’t very useful to describe the *Summa*’s brand of realism as a ‘moderate’ one. Why not? Moderate realism is usually opposed to so-called exaggerated realism, the arch-exponent of which was Plato (and William of Champeaux).²⁶ The distinction was in great vogue among neo-scholastic historians who were keen to show that their favourite philosopher (e.g. Aquinas or Scotus or, indeed, the author(s) of the *Summa Halensis*) was a moderate who eschewed extremes. But one person’s moderate is another’s extremist, and it is questionable how useful a label can be that is applied to theories as different as those of, say, Scotus and Aquinas. Furthermore, the *Summa*’s theory, with its assertion that universals exist in things (albeit dividedly), doesn’t strike one as particularly moderate at all.

So what kind of realism? I am going to suggest that we can more usefully think of our authors as espousing a form of *trope-realism*. In saying this I realize that contemporary historians of philosophy have also applied *that* label to authors as different as, say, Aquinas or William of Ockham, whose views one might hesitate to bring under the same banner; still, it seems to apply particularly well to the view put forward by the *Summa*. The word ‘trope’ in the precise sense in which it is used by phi-

25 SH I, P1, In2, Tr1, Q3, C4 (n. 316), p. 464: ‘Ad secundam rationem dicendum quod ‘ratio’ duobus modis dicitur: uno modo ‘ratio’ dicitur ipsa acceptio quae est in collatione, alio modo appellatur ‘ratio’ illud quod accipitur in collatione. Quando enim intellectus accipit rem absolute, tunc dicitur intelligere; sed quando accipit ipsam in collatione, secundum quod confert unum alii, tunc dicitur ‘ratio’. Si ergo dicatur ‘ratio’ ipse motus vel acceptio rei ab anima in collatione, hoc modo non accipit Damascenus ‘rationem’, sed modo secundo. Unde non vult dicere Damascenus quod solum considerentur divinae personae ‘ratione’ quae sit motus ipsius intellectus sive acceptio in collatione, sed ‘ratione’ quae est ipsum acceptum ab intellectu conferente. Et haec ‘ratio’ res est, sicut dicimus ‘universale est ratio’, non quia ipsum sit acceptio ipsa, sed est ‘ratio’, id est ipsum acceptum ab intellectu conferente, quia universale accipitur ab intellectu in collatione, scilicet in multis, ipsum tamen est res.’

26 One of the first historians of medieval philosophy to use the phrases ‘moderate realism’ and ‘exaggerated realism’ is Maurice de Wulf, in his *Histoire de la philosophie médiévale précédée d’un aperçu sur la philosophie ancienne* (Louvain: Institut supérieur de philosophie, 1900), 169.

losophers, was coined by Donald Williams in 1953, to refer to what others have called ‘abstract particulars’, ‘particular properties’, ‘particular qualities’, or even ‘characters’.²⁷ Common to all versions is the belief that qualities or characters (trope theorists usually eschew the term ‘universal’) are real (contra ‘austere’ nominalists) but particular (contra Platonic realists). Because particulars play center-stage in trope-theoretical solutions to the problem of universals, one often talks not of ‘trope realism’ but of ‘trope nominalism’. But not all those whose solution to the problem of universals involves an appeal to tropes have been nominalists. Indeed, the one trope-theorist I am going to appeal to to support my claim that there is a significant doctrinal parallel between the *Summa* and trope-theoretical accounts of the problem of universals, namely George Frederick Stout, denied he was a nominalist at all:

The position that characters are as particular as the concrete things or individuals which they characterize, is common to me and the nominalists. But I differ from them essentially in maintaining that the distributive unity of a class or kind is an ultimate and unanalysable type of unity.²⁸

Because of space constraints, I am going to rest my case that there exists a substantive doctrinal parallel between the *Summa*’s brand of realism and at least one version of trope theory on a quick commentary of this very short text. There are three points I want to draw attention to. The first point is simply the description of characters as being ‘as particular as the concrete things’ they characterize. Substitute ‘signate forms’ for ‘characters’ here and we have a statement the *Summa* would gladly endorse (even though both concepts might not be exactly congruent); for, remember: signate forms are one of the three sorts of particulars distinguished by the *Summa*. The second point is the use of the phrase ‘distributive unity’. This is the expression Stout uses to describe the type of unity embodied by all the particulars falling under the same class. It is the Stoutian counterpart of the *Summa*’s descriptions of universals as *un[a] sed multiplicat[a]*, or having ‘diminished unity’. The unity is distributed across all the members of the class; it is not the unity of some supposed ‘indivisible quality’ that ‘is really the same’.²⁹ Likewise, for the *Summa* the diminished unity of the universal, which exists in its particulars dividedly, is to be strictly distinguished from the *summa unitas* of the divine essence, which is ‘not multiplied according to the multiplication of Persons’.³⁰

It is true that Stout in the above quotation talks about the unity as being that of the *class*, and this might seem to suggest that he thinks of distributive unities as mental objects. But this is not what he means, as the following passage makes clear:

²⁷ Donald Cary Williams, ‘On the Elements of Being: I,’ *The Review of Metaphysics* 7 (1953): 7.

²⁸ George Frederick Stout, ‘The Nature of Universals and Propositions,’ *Proceedings of the British Academy* 10 (1921–3), 159.

²⁹ Stout, ‘The Nature of Universals,’ 162.

³⁰ *SH* I, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M3, C2 (n. 83), p. 134.

Agreeing with the nominalist that characters are as particular as the things or substances they characterize, the inference I draw from this thesis is not that there really are no universals, but that the universal is a distributive unity.³¹

What I take Stout to be saying here is that distributive unities are ‘ontic’; they are features of reality; they are not mental, generated by the mind in the process of comparing particulars, and having no purchase on reality. I am not sure how common such a view is amongst trope theorists, but I believe that it certainly invites comparison with the *Summa*. The third point, which naturally flows out of the preceding two, is Stout’s statement that the distributive unity embodied by a given character is ‘ultimate and unanalysable’. Although this point is not explicitly made by the *Summa*, it does follow from their position. For if, as is the case according to the *Summa*, all there is, *a parte rei*, to any universal, is the loose unity following from its particular instantiations, then that is where the ontological buck stops as far as that universal is concerned. That makes that universal qua existing dividedly in particulars *ultimate and unanalyzable*.

If this is right, then, notwithstanding other differences in doctrine, context and aim (and, again, those differences are undeniable, and a more detailed analysis would be necessary to fully spell them out), there is a real, and intriguing, convergence in metaphysical insight between our authors, one that is not captured by referring to them as moderate realists.

The *Summa* and other Early Franciscans on Universals and Particulars

Having presented the main line of the *Summa*’s discussion of whether universals and particulars apply to God and commented on its philosophical interest, I now want to briefly examine how its treatment of this issue compares with those of other early Franciscans before 1245, the date by which the *Summa* was written.³² I have examined five relevant texts for the purposes of this comparison. They are by three of the first four regent masters for the Franciscans at Paris (i.e. all save William of Melitona). Two are by Alexander of Hales, two (assuming 4, below, really is his) by John of La Rochelle, and one by Odo Rigaldus. Here are the titles and dates:

1. Alexander of Hales, *Glossa in librum I Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*. Date: 1223–1227.³³

³¹ Stout, ‘The Nature of Universals,’ 161.

³² According to Roger Bacon’s testimony, in *Opus minus*, in *Fr. Rogeris Bacon Opera quaedam hactenus inedita*, ed. J.S. Brewer (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Robert, 1959), 32–327.

³³ Alexander of Hales, *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Glossa in quatuor libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi* (hereafter, *Glossa*), 4 vols, Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica Medii Aevi, 12–5 (Quaracchi:

2. Alexander of Hales, Quaestio (postquam fuit frater) <Utrum sit ponere vere universale in divinis>. Date: 1236–1245.³⁴
3. John of La Rochelle, *Summa de divinis nominibus*, Quaestio <Utrum hoc nomen Deus sit universale ad <nomina personalia> et illa sint singularia sicut eius singularia>. Date: before 1245.³⁵
4. John of La Rochelle (?), *Glossa in Sententias*. Date: 1236–1245.³⁶
5. Odo Rigaldus, *Lectura super quattuor libros Sententiarum*. Date: 1241–1245.³⁷

The first thing to note about these texts is that they all bear a very strong family resemblance. All exploit the same body of authoritative authors, Augustine, Boethius, John of Damascus, Peter Lombard, and Richard of St Victor being the main ones. Also, many of the arguments they advance in support of their respective positions recur in other authors, either in the *solutio* proper or in answers to objections. For instance, an argument that plays an important role in Alexander's *solutio* in his *Glossa* relies on Boethius' distinction between *quo est* and *quod est*. Alexander identifies the universal with the *quo est* and the particular with the *quod est*, and concludes that since the *quo est* and *quod est* do not differ in God, there can be neither universal nor particular in God.³⁸ The same answer is found in a more condensed form in Vat. Lat. 691:

To solve these objections one must note that the difference between universal and particular follows the difference between “quod est” and “quo est”. In the First <being> these are wholly the same, and thus there is no charater of universal or particular in divine matters.³⁹

Another example is the thesis, which we have seen plays an important part in the *Summa*'s solution, that the commonality of the divine essence is received ‘non-multi-

Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1951–7), 1:200–4. Dating according to the editors, ‘Prolegomena,’ in *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Glossa in quatuor libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, 1:116*.

³⁴ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 16406, fol. 41ra.

³⁵ Trier, Stadtbibliothek 162, fol. 130va.

³⁶ Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 691, fol. 24rab. For the dating see J.G. Bougerol, ‘La glose sur les Sentences du manuscrit vat. lat. 691,’ *Antonianum* 55 (1980): 166.

³⁷ About the dating of Odo's *Lectura*, see Leonardo Sileo, *De rerum ideis: Dio e le cose nel dibattito universitario del tredicesimo secolo* (Vatican City: Urbaniana University Press, 2011), 16*–20*. My transcription of Odo's commentary is based on Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 14910, though I have also looked at Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 5982, and Troyes, Bibliothèque municipale 824.

³⁸ Alexander of Hales, *Glossa* I, d. 19, 1:201: ‘Item, dicit Boethius in libro *De Trinitate*: “In simplicis non differt ‘quod est’ et ‘quo est’, in composito aliud est.” Universale vero est ‘quo est’, differens ab eo ‘quod est’; particulare est illud ‘quod est’, differens ab eo ‘quo est’. Cum ergo in Deo non differant ‘quod est’ et ‘quo est’, in Deo non est universale vel particulare, et sic nec genus nec species.’

³⁹ Vat. lat. 691, fol. 24ra: ‘Ad horum solutionem notandum est quod universale (universaliter: *cod.*) et singulare differunt per differentiam eius quod est et quo est. In primo omnino sunt idem et ita non est ratio universalis et particularis in divinis.’

pliedly' by the Persons, unlike the commonality of the universal, which is received in multiplied fashion. This same distinction is found in Odo Rigaldus's discussion.⁴⁰ It also forms the basis of Alexander's *solutio*, this time in his *Quaestio* (Text 2 above), where it is coupled with another thesis defended by the *Summa*, namely that although the divine essence is not a universal, common predicates of Persons are:

To the second <objection> it must be said that here there is nothing common according to essence <that is> multipliable in God, as one finds in creatures, as is plain from that commonality that is multipliable according to the nature of the supposits. Thus, not only can we say "Peter is a man", "Paul is a man", but also "Peter and Paul are two men." Yet, although we can say in divine matters "The Father is God", "The Son is God", "The Holy Spirit is God", nevertheless we cannot say that there are three gods, rather God is one. And thus universal being in God is not common in the same way a universal is common in creatures. But in creatures one does not only find common that is multipliable according to essence, but also <the common> that is common to God in reason. Hence when we say "Peter is an individual", "Paul is an individual" and so on, "individual" is common to those supposits according to reason, not according to essence; Similarly, we can say here in a second way that it <i.e. "individual"> is common in God with respect to "Person" or "hypostasis". Whence there is here a commonality of intention, not of thing.⁴¹

40 Odo Rigaldus, *Lectura super quattuor libros Sententiarum* I, d. 19 (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 14910, fols 50vb–51ra): 'Ad hoc dicendum quod in divinis non est universale nec particulare; particulare non, quia particulare dicit participationem essentie; una enim essentia numero non est in multis particularibus; sed partitur et particulatur in eis. Hoc autem fit dupliciter, vel ex adventu materie, sicut particulatur essentia speciei in individuis, vel ex adventu differentiarum, sicut particulatur essentia {51ra} generis in diversis suis speciebus. Neutrum autem horum reperitur in divinis; immo essentia una et eadem numero, sine sui participatione tota est in qualibet trium personarum, et sic ratio particularis non cadit ibi' [To this it must be said that in God there is neither universal nor particular. There is no particular, as particular indicates the partitioning of the essence. For the numerically identical essence is not in many particulars; rather, it is partitioned and particularized in them. This happens in two ways: either through the advent of matter, as when the essence of the species is particularized in individuals, or through the advent of differentiae, as when the essence of a genus is particularized in a diversity of its species. But neither of these two cases applies to God; indeed, (God's) essence is numerically the one and the same. It is, without partitioning, wholly in each one of the three Persons, so that the notion of particular does not apply here].

41 Alexander de Hales, *Questio <Utrum sit ponere vere universale in divinis>* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 16406, fol. 41rb): 'Ad secundum dicendum quod ibi non est aliquod commune secundum essentiam multiplicabile in divinis sicut est (etiam: *cod.*) reperire in creaturis, sicut patet de hoc communi (hoc: *add. cod.*) quod est multiplicabile secundum naturam suppositorum. Unde non solum possumus dicere 'Petrus est homo', 'Paulus est homo', sed etiam 'Petrus et Paulus sunt duo homines'. Sed licet possimus dicere in divinis 'Pater est Deus', 'Filius est Deus', 'Spiritus Sanctus est Deus', non tamen possumus dicere quod sint tres dii, sed unus est Deus. Et sic non est eodem modo esse universale commune in divinis sicut est universale secundum essentiam in creaturis. Sed in creaturis non solum est reperire commune secundum essentiam multiplicabile sed etiam commune ratione Deo. Ergo cum dicimus 'Petrus est individuum', 'Paulus est individuum', et sic de aliis, individuum est commune ad hec supposita secundum rationem, non secundum essentiam. Per simile hic secundo modo possumus dicere quod est commune in divinis respectu persone vel ypostasis. Possumus enim dicere quod Pater est ypostasis, Filius est ypostasis et similiter Spiritus Sanctus. Unde est ibi communitas intentionis, non rei.'

A further example is the distinction between a universal being *de multis* or *in multis*, on which the *Summa* had based its argument against universals *in divinis*. The same distinction figures prominently in Odo Rigaldus's discussion:

Again, there isn't the character of universal here, for although "being in many" pertains to worthiness, "being of many" pertains to unworthiness, inasmuch as it denotes partness.

Again, "being of" denotes the character of what constitutes, just as genus denotes the being of the species, because <the species> is constituted out of genus and differences. But such partness and constitution is not to be found in God, hence nor is the character of a universal.⁴²

Even the *Summa*'s doctrine of 'signate forms' is (distantly) echoed by a comment of John of La Rochelle in his *Summa*:

That character of universal that is apt to be predicated of many is understood of many things that differ not merely personally, but by their proper natures, such as Socrates and Plato, of whom "man" is predicated. "God" is not predicated of many so understood. For the divine Persons do not differ by their proper natures.⁴³

Is there any evidence beyond the presence of many of the same ideas or arguments in the *Summa* as in the other texts identified above, of actual textual dependence of the *Summa* on any of the above texts? The only unmistakable case concerns the *Glossa* of Vat. Lat. 691, which lists a series of four arguments purporting to show that the divine essence is a genus or a species with respect to the Persons: the same arguments reappear in the very same order in the *Summa* as the first four *sed contras* (out of a total of seven).⁴⁴ And the *Summa*'s responses to the three first of those objections (but not the fourth) follow the corresponding ones in the *Glossa* very closely, with the exception of a short *preterea* paragraph present in the *Glossa* which our Summists left out. Here are the objections:

⁴² Odo Rigaldus, *Lectura super quattuor libros Sententiarum* I, d. 19 (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 14910, fol. 51ra): 'Item, ratio universalis non est ibi, quia licet 'esse in multis' dignitatis sit, tamen 'esse de multis' indignitatis sic est, quia dicit rationem partialitatis. Item, 'esse de' dicit rationem constituentis, sicut genus dicit esse speciei, quia ex genere et differentiis constituitur. Huiusmodi autem partialitatem et constitutionem non est reperire in divinis et ideo nec rationem universalis.'

⁴³ Johannes of La Rochelle, *Summa de divinis nominibus* (Trier, Stadtbibliothek 162, fol. 130va): 'Illa ratio universalis apta nata de pluribus predicari intelligitur de pluribus, non que differunt personaliter tantum, immo que differunt naturis propriis, ut Sor et Plato, de quibus predicatur homo. Deus enim non predicatur de pluribus sic acceptis. Non enim persone divine differunt naturis (personis: *cod.*) propriis.'

⁴⁴ That the *Summa* drew from Vat. lat. 691 here was pointed out by Victorin Doucet, 'Prolegomena in librum III necnon in libros I et II "Summae Fratris Alexandri",' in *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica*, vol. 4 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1948), CCLVIII, under 'Num. 333–344.'

<i>Glossa in Sententias</i> ⁴⁵	<i>Summa Halensis</i> ⁴⁶
Sed contra. Videtur quod divina essentia sit genus vel species. Divina essentia predicatur de qualibet persona essentialiter, non conversim; ergo est ad eas genus vel species.	Contra: 1. Divina essentia praedicatur de qualibet persona essentialiter et non conversim; ergo est genus vel species personarum.
Item, particulare sive singulare est de quo aliquid dicitur, ipsum vero de nullo. Sed hec ratio convenit cuilibet persone. Ergo quilibet persona est singulare sive particulare. Sed particulare sive singulare dicitur ad universale. Igitur cum persona non dicatur nisi ad essentiam, essentia est universale.	2. Praeterea, particulare sive singulare est de quo dicitur aliud, ipsum vero de nullo alio dicitur; sed ratio ista convenit cuilibet personae; ergo quaelibet persona est particulare sive singulare; sed singulare et particulare dicuntur ad universale; ergo, cum persona non dicatur nisi ad essentiam, essentia est universale.
Ad idem Boethius sic diffinit “personam”: “persona est rationalis nature substantia individua”; sed omnis substantia individua est individuum; ergo persona est individuum; sed individuum dicitur ad universale. Ergo essentia est universale.	3. Item, “persona est rationalis naturae substantia individua”; sed substantia individua est individuum; ergo persona est individuum; sed individuum dicitur ad universale; ergo essentia est universale.
Item, Damascenus dicit quod “Deus et homo significant speciem; ypostasis autem individuum demonstrat, scilicet patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum, Petrum, Paulum”.	4. Item, Damascenus dicit quod “‘Deus’ et ‘homo’ significant speciem communem; hypostasis autem individuum demonstrat, scilicet Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum, Petrum et Paulum”.

45 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 691, fol. 24r: [But against this, it seems that the divine essence is a genus or a species. The divine essence is predicated of each Person essentially, but the converse does not hold. Therefore, (the divine essence) is a genus or a species with respect to them.

Again, a particular or a singular is that of which something is said, whereas itself is said of nothing. But this definition applies to each Person. Therefore, each Person is a singular or a particular. But a particular or a singular is said with respect to a universal. Hence, since a Person is said only with respect to essence, essence is universal.

Boethius defines “person” thusly: “a person is an individual substance having a rational nature” but every individual substance is an individual; hence, a person is an individual; but an individual is said with respect to a universal. Therefore, essence is universal.

Again, Damascene says that “God and man signify species; but a hypostasis picks out an individual, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Peter, Paul”].

46 SH I, P2, In1, Tr1, Q2, C1 (n. 337), p. 499: [Against the above: 1. The divine essence is predicated of each Person essentially, but the converse does not hold. Therefore, (the divine essence) is the genus or the species of the Persons.

2. Furthermore, a particular or singular is that of which something else is said, whereas itself is said of nothing else; but this definition applies to each Person; therefore, each Person is particular or singular; but singular and particular are said with respect to a universal; therefore, since a Person is said only in relation to the essence, the essence is universal.

3. Again, a person is an individual substance having a rational nature; but an individual substance is an individual; therefore, a Person is individual; but an individual is said in relation to a universal; therefore, the essence is universal.

4. Again, Damascene says that “‘God’ and ‘man’ signify a common species, while hypostasis picks out an individual, namely the father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Peter, and Paul”].

Here are the answers:

*Glossa in Sententias*⁴⁷

Ad illud quod obicitur primum, dicendum quod predicari essentialiter dicitur equivoce de substantia divina et de genere vel specie, quia essentia divina aliter est essentia patris et filii et spiritus sancti, aliter animal est essentia hominis et asini: unitas enim animalis in suis speciebus, ut dicit {rb} Damascenus, non consideratur re, sed unitas divine nature in personis re consider-

*Summa Halensis*⁴⁸

1. Ad primo obiectum, quod “divina essentia praedicatur” etc.: dicendum quod “praedicari essentialiter” dicitur aequivoce de essentia divina et de genere sive specie, quoniam essentia divina aliter est essentia Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, aliter animal essentia hominis et asini: unitas enim animalis in suis speciebus, ut dicit Damascenus, non consideratur re, sed ratione;

47 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 691, fol. 24ra: [To the first objection, it must be said that “to be predicated essentially” is said equivocally of the divine substance and of genus or species, for the way in which the divine essence is the essence of the Father, of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is other than the way in which animal is the essence of man and donkey. For, as Damascene says, the unity of animal in its species is not considered as a thing, whereas the unity of the divine nature in the Persons is considered as a thing. And this is said because the divine essence is not multiplied in the Persons in the way in which the genus is multiplied in species and the species in individuals.

To the objection that “a Person is a singular because it is that of which something is said, whereas it is not said of something else”, it can be said that “of which something is said” is said equivocally of Person and of singular and particular, for when I say “of which it is said”, in so far as these words apply to a singular and particular they bespeak a relation to matter or to a subject, neither of which is found in God.

Furthermore, in “particular” there is the idea of part, but in God there is no part. For a part has diminution and imperfection. Singular, therefore, cannot be in God for it bespeaks composition according to substance and place, and according to accidents. To the objection that a person is an individual, it must be replied that “individual substance” is said in two ways: either on account of a distinction of properties, and in this way individual does apply to Person in God; or on account of a separation from other things in respect to number and according to place and accidents, and in this sense individual denotes a singular].

48 *SH* I, P2, In1, Tr1, Q2, C1 (n. 337), p. 500: [1. To what was objected first, namely that “the divine essence is predicated” etc., it must be said that “to be predicated essentially” is said equivocally of the divine essence, and of genus or species. For the way in which the divine essence is the essence of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is other than the way in which animal is the essence of man and donkey. For, as Damascene says, the unity of animal in its species is not considered as a thing, whereas the unity of the divine nature in the Persons is considered as a thing. And this is said because the divine essence is not multiplied in the Persons, whereas the genus is multiplied in the species and the substance of the species in the individuals.

2. To the second objection it must be stated that when it is said “particular or singular is that of which something else is said, whereas itself is said of nothing”, “of” is understood in the sense of a relation to a subject; but the character of a subject is in no way in God. However, insofar as “of” is said of a divine Person, it is said metaphorically on account of a resemblance of speech, not because a real relation is posited to the thing, but only according to speech.

3. To the third it must be said that “individual substance” in the definition of person is said in two ways: either on account of a separation which is according to substance and place and accidents, and in this way it is said of the created person; or on account of a distinction of properties only, and in this way “individual substance” applies to the uncreated Person; (...)].

Continued

<i>Glossa in Sententias</i> ⁴⁷	<i>Summa Halensis</i> ⁴⁸
atur. Et hoc dicitur quia divina essentia non multiplicatur in personis, sicut genus multiplicatur in speciebus et species in individuis.	unitas essentiae in personis re quidem consideratur: et hoc dicitur, quia essentia non multiplicatur in personis, substantia vero generis multiplicatur in speciebus et substantia speciei in individuis.
Ad illud quod obicitur quod “persona est singulare quia est de quo dicitur aliquid, ipsa non de alio”, potest dici quoniam illud “de quo dicitur aliud” dicitur equivoce de persona et singulari et de particulari, quia cum dico “de quo dicitur”, ut convenit singulari dicitur habitudinem ad materiam sive ad subiectum, quorum neutrum est in divinis.	2. Ad secundum dicendum quod cum dicitur “particulare sive singulare est de quo dicitur aliud, ipsum vero de nullo”, intelligitur “de” per rationem habitudinis ad subiectum; ratio autem subiecti nullo modo est in divinis. Secundum vero quod dicitur de persona divina, dicitur transumptive ratione similitudinis locutionis, non ut ponatur ibi habitudo ad subiectum secundum rem, sed solum secundum locutionem.
Preterea, particulare dicitur rationem partis, sed pars non potest esse in divinis. Pars enim semper habet diminutionem et imperfectionem. Singulare igitur non potest esse ibi quia dicitur compositionem secundum substantiam et situm et secundum accidentia. Ad illud quod persona est individuum, dicendum quod “substantia individua” dicitur dupliciter: vel propter distinctionem proprietatum, et sic convenit individuum persone in divinis; vel propter separationem ab aliis quantum ad numerum et secundum situm et accidentia, et sic individuum facit singulare.	3. Ad tertium dicendum quod in definitione personae “substantia individua” dicitur dupliciter: vel propter separationem quae est secundum substantiam et situm et accidentia, et sic dicitur de persona creata; vel propter distinctionem proprietatum solum, et hoc modo convenit “substantia individua” personae increatae; (...)

Although there can be little doubt that our Summists ‘lifted’ these four *sed contras* and the responses to the first three of them from the *Glossa* of Val. Lat. 691, it is interesting to note that their *solution* is very different from that of Vat. Lat. 691. I indicated above that the solution of Vat. Lat. 691 relied on Boethius’ *quo est / quod est* distinction. But the *Summa* does not appeal to that distinction in its solution, which has more in common with Alexander’s *Quaestio* and Odo’s *Lectura*. Are we to conclude, then, that what our Summists are offering is but a mere ‘repackaging’ of familiar doctrines? Although there would be some truth to this conclusion, it would not be entirely correct. For the *Summa*’s discussion does offer at least a modicum of originality, even compared with Alexander’s *Quaestio* and Odo’s *Lectura*. It is to be found in the threefold classification of types of particularity, and the emphasis on the signate form’s particularity as a means of distinguishing the commonality of universals from the commonality of the divine essence. Although that theory is not fully spelled out by our Summists, it is sufficiently developed to allow them to provide a solution to the problem of ‘whether

the notions of universal and particular apply to divine matters' that is plausible, answers some standard objections, and is philosophically suggestive.