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Maritain's Critical Realism

xxx "critical" realism, December 31, 81

Is the dispute about calling realism "critical" substantive or merely verbal (doctrinal or verbal)? I have in mind Gilson's apparent disagreement with Maritain rather than with anyone else. How would we answer this question?

First, state using *other* words what Maritain means by "critical." Second, do we agree that this is what he means to communicate by "critical"? Third, when we are agreed that this is indeed what he means, is what he means to communicate about realism true of realism? If so, then the dispute is merely verbal. For example, we might be saying that Maritain is completely correct but what he wants to say about realism, but uses the word "critical" incorrectly. Only if we disagree that what Maritain intends to communicate by "critical," after we have stated that using words that do not include "critical," is the dispute with Maritain more than verbal.

But what Maritain means to communicate can be restated in a way that is clearly true of realism.

Page 102, first paragraph: the second half of the paragraph is a good description of the epistemologist's method, from the point of view of why he can answer the skeptic's question without entering into doubt. Read from "but because of the power of self-knowledge and self-criticism ..."

xxx critical realism, May 23, 2005

Epistemology looks at knowledge from the point of view of the *final cause*; logic from the point of view of formal causes and psychology from the point of view of

efficient causes. See "introduction to philosophy," page 159, note one.

If they were asked what does Maritain consider "the first problem for critique to solve," how many of his readers would answer "the elucidation of the notion of truth"? (76) He had said the same thing in his earlier work on epistemology, Reflexions sur l'intelligence.¹ There he makes clear that by the elucidation of truth he means, first, the answer to the question, "What is truth?" and, second, the solution to problems about how truth is possible that arise from the answer to that question. To understand Maritain, therefore, we have to understand why he considers that the first question critique must answer and how the answer to that question creates problems for explaining how truth so understood is possible.

For Maritain, the job of epistemology is to evaluate, to show what "value," (73, 92) what goal,² is achieved "on the different levels of elaborating knowledge" (73), or "in the various moments of human knowledge (74). Knowledge begins with percipere (73) and ends with judicare (74). But what is achieved in perception and in the judgments of mathematics, logic, physical science, metaphysics, natural theology? Is the same goal achieved by perception and by all the diverse kinds of judgments that derive from it? And how does the goal attained in perception enable us attain the goals attained in those other levels of human knowledge?

The ultimate state of human knowledge is judgment. In judgment we evaluate statements by deciding whether or not they achieve the goal of being true. So knowledge of the truth or falsity of statements is the fundamental and principal evaluation with which epistemology is concerned. In the case of any "level of elaborating knowledge," epistemology seeks first to determine that we can know the truth of statements made at that level. The answer to that question will necessarily involve some understanding of the relation of that level of knowledge to perception, from which every level of knowledge derives. After determining that the goal of truth

is attained at more than one level of knowledge, epistemology seeks to know how the goals attained at those levels differ.

But if truth is the primary goal with reference to which epistemology evaluates, we first need to know what truth is. Hence the question of what is truth is epistemology's first problem. The answer to any other question that might claim to be epistemology's first question would presuppose an answer to the question, "What is truth." For example, if I set out to answer whether consciousness attains the external world, I am setting out to determine whether the statement "Consciousness attains the external world" achieves the goal of truth.

In answering the question, "What is this goal: truth?" epistemology is only making explicit something we are aware of prephilosophically. Indeed, epistemology is just an extension of the kind of evaluating we do whenever we judge some statement true or false. In any judgment, there is an initial, implicit reflection of the knower on her knowledge. For in judging truth, one is not only aware of the existence of a state of affairs, but she is also aware of the existence of a statement making a claim about the state of affairs. Every evaluation of the truth of a statement is an implicit critique asking whether thought achieves its goal; and epistemology is an explicit extension of the kind of reflection on knowledge every evaluation of the truth of statements requires.

Furthermore, the very asking of epistemological questions presupposes knowledge, including knowledge of the nature of truth, we possess prior to our explicit epistemological reflection:

An authentic critique of knowledge does not imply a single instant of real or universal doubt. Such an instant of doubt in effect includes in actu exercito the negation of something about which we pretend not to know anything as yet³ (I mean the essential ordination of the intellect to being). And that is a

vicious circle.

And that is not the only one. The value of certitude cannot be cast into doubt in reflection without expressly referring to an absolute and incontestable ideal of certitude, to a notion of certainty that is already acquired and held to be guaranteed, to a strict principle that will command the entire discussion that follows, namely, that valid scientific certitude -- certitude that has objective truth as its correlative -- bears certain characteristics, and demands certain conditions. There is at least something for reflection which cannot be at all doubtful. That is a reflex and, indeed, philosophical certitude, one that may easily be recognized and that has to be put outside universal doubt. And it implies all the elements of critical philosophy: a notion of truth, reality, objectivity, etc. Critical philosophy has, therefore, begun even before the start assigned to it (by the opponent). (78 and 78, n. 3)

The conditions for asking epistemological questions are what enable us to answer them. But those conditions are also what give rise to epistemological questions to begin with. Maritain holds that "critical" questions arise "naturally." As the quoted passage indicates, he does not mean that lived skeptical doubt arises naturally; such a doubt would contradict the conditions necessary for its existence. But reflection on things we know prephilosophically gives rise to critical questions in "signified act." That is, issues such as the possibility of universal doubt arise naturally as hypotheses to be examined.

In RI, he had shown how critical questions had arisen naturally in Greek philosophy from reflection on the unavoidable question: what is truth. Epistemological problems did not have to wait for the howlers of modern philosophers. In DK, he argues that critical questions arise naturally, not from an analysis of the history of philosophy, but from a reflection on the common sense idea

of truth that epistemology must start from.⁴ In both cases, he comes to the conclusion that truth is a conformity between thought and things, in particular, between a statement to be judged and things. But he also comes to the conclusion that:

We are compelled to effect a certain disjunction between the thing and thought, to recognize that the conditions that attach to one do not attach to the other. (84)

Otherwise:

How could we know a thing that was one in itself, for example, what we call "man" by means of a complex thought like the idea "living being" joined to the idea "capable of sensation" and the idea "capable of understanding"? And how could we know by universal ideas a thing that is singular in its proper existence? (84)

In the inner world of our understanding there is a whole multitude of distinct views or distinct concepts for things that exist undivided in the world of nature, and they lead quite a different life in the latter than they do in the former. In the world of nature the lion eats the antelope; in the world of understanding the lion receives the predicate carnivorous by means of the copula. And the possibility of error arises simply from the disparity in the way things exist in these two worlds. (86)

In the face of this diversity between thought and things, how are we to understand the conformity required for truth? As it did among the Greeks, philosophic reflection on the prephilosophic understanding of truth leads to problems for philosophy to solve. In RI, he put the problem this way:

If, on the one hand, there is being independent of my mind and, on the other hand, there is my mind, and if an identity, in the strictest sense, between

them in no way occurs, then my mind attains only a resemblance of being, not being itself. And the philosopher will always ask, "What guarantees that that this resemblance really resembles, that the conformity of my mind with being is real and not only apparent?" (RI, 16-17)

Given the diversity between the conditions of thought and the conditions of things, how can thought attain more than a resemblance of what exists, a resemblance whose value as a resemblance can always be open to doubt? To what degree does the "resemblance" resemble, and to what degree does it not resemble? We can have no answer to such a question, since the only available bases for an answer would be other imperfect resemblances.⁵

So far, Maritain's analysis of truth is not original, and his initial statement about the nature of the conformity required for truth (88) will not be remembered for its clarity. But his main contribution is yet to come. In RI, he solved the problem by saying that we can "distinguish in our thought that which is of things themselves and that which is of our manner of knowing." (RI, 17). In DK, he repeats and expands on what he had said in RI; the conformity in truth is between that which is known and what exists outside the mind, not between the manner in which it exists in the mind in order to be known and the manner in which it exists outside the mind. But then he goes beyond the analysis of RI to introduce the problem of thing and object.

Consider the statement "Some lion is carnivorous." Being aware of the truth of that statement requires being aware that something has been made an object, made the term of a knowledge relation, in two different ways, once as what is described by "some lion" and once as what is described by "carnivorous." If that statement is true, at least one of the things in the extension of "lion" must be the same as one of the things in the extension of "carnivorous." So the truth of that statement requires identity between what has been made an object in one way and what has been made an object in another. The truth of the statement requires that

what are distinct from the point of view of the diverse way they are made objects (let us say "logically" distinct⁶) are not distinct but are identical as things, that is, as more than objects. And to know the truth of the statement is to know the identity of logically distinct objects as things. If the relation identity holds between thing and object as required by the statement, then the relation of truth, conformity with things, holds between the statement and things. The truth (conformity with things) of a statement is a function of the identity of its objects with things.

So, to the relation of conformity between thought and things of the traditional correspondence theory of truth, Maritain adds the identity between object and things. What does Maritain gain by speaking about the relation between objects of thought and things and not, more simply, between thought and things. He gains many things, as we will see. But the most fundamental thing he gains, the gain from which his other gains derive, is a solution to the problem of the correspondence theory of truth. If correspondence is a relation between thought and things, we first have the problem of what this relation is, since it is not identity. Again, is it resemblance? Then resemblance in what respect and to what degree? And resemblance between what? One of the terms of the relation is an extramental thing, but what is the other term? And what are the rules for judging that this resemblance holds?

If the relation is not resemblance, perhaps our thoughts are true when they satisfy some built in rules of "projection" or "representation." For example, the meaning of the word "lion" may have nothing to do with the nature of the thing we are discussing, but that meaning happens to be what represents individuals of that kind in the human system of projection. Then to judge the truth of "This is a lion" or "Some lion is carnivorous," we would have to consult those rules, since there is no other relation between the sensory evidence and the meanings of the words in those sentences. But if we consult those rules, we ought to know what they are, and we manifestly do not; we do not even know that they exist. And what do the rules say

about how things we know nothing about as yet are to be represented? Do they already state the right ways to project tomorrow's discoveries in science and technology? Then what those things are must somehow already be coded into the rules, even though they do not yet exist, and we do not know what they will be. For the rules relate what things are to terms otherwise unrelated to what things are.

There might be something analogous to rules of projection in the human thought process, but if so, their function, whatever that may be and at whatever stage it may take place, is not to provide an answer to what is the "correspondence" in the correspondence theory of truth. In fact, by explaining "correspondence" by rules of projection or representation, we merely push the question back to what is "projection" or "representation." In other words, we can ask "Rules of what?" What makes, A, something otherwise totally unrelated to B, a "representation" of B? We might be tempted to say the "rules" of connection make A a representation of B. But there are all sorts of rules. The mere existence of a rule establishing a connection between one thing and another does not make one of them something "represented" and the other a "representation." And by "rules" we ordinarily mean strings of marks that have an interpretation, that "signify" something; this understanding of "rules" cannot help us here. To function as rules, strings of marks have to be interpreted by relating them to something other than themselves, their signification, to which they are not related by being what they are. But what is it for marks to "signify," and how do marks become related to that which they signify? By other "rules"?

A could be connected with B otherwise than by rules. There might be some causal connection uniquely linking A to B such that, if we discover that causal connection, we can use A as a representation of B. For that, however, we would have to know the connection between A and B; the truth that this connection holds would have to be an object of our awareness. But then we could not explain our awareness of truth by the existence of the connection.

In attempting to explain "correspondence" by "representation" or "projection," we are explaining is more fundamental by the less, the cause by the effect. We have in mind the model of a rule that associates the word "lion" with with lions. But the functioning of that rule presupposes our awareness of lions, our awareness of "lion" and our awareness of the relation established between the two. What is happening is that we start with consciousness of what it is to be a lion; we start with familiarity with that kind of consciousness. And that gives us a model for our idea of "projection" or "representation." They are projection and representation of what it is to be a lion. They are relations tied to what it is to be a lion the way our consciousness is. But then they can neither substitute for nor explain that consciousness.

If something anaogous to rules of projection help explain that consciousness, they must do so preconsciously. That is, they function in a process whose result is consciousness of what it is to be a lion, not consciousness of something other than what it is to be a lion. If the process that has such a result uses something like rules of representation, the result of using those rules is not something which, under different rules, might not be of what it is to be a lion but of something else. The result is consciousness of what it is to be a lion, and that consciousness would not, under different circumstances, remain what it is and yet be consciousness of what it is to be something other than a lion.

Furthermore, if correspondence is a relation between thought and things, we also have the problem of how that relation could be known to hold. If to know the truth we need to know the relation of our thoughts to things beyond our thoughts yet our thoughts are the means by which we know, we would have to go beyond that which we know to know that our thoughts are true; for we would have to go beyond the means by which we know, our thoughts. Or, if the result of "projecting" B were consciousness of an object, A, other than B, we could never know that A is a

representation of B. For to know that A is a representation of B, we have to know B; one of our objects must be B, not something other than B. (And if B itself is an object of our awareness, then whatever the "rules of projection" do, the result is a relation of awareness between ourselves and B, not between ourselves and some tertium quid that would be a "representation" of B.)

Maritain's position is that correspondence is a side effect of another relation, a relation not of representation or resemblance, but of strict identity. In judging "This is a rose," we do not compare the perceived individual designated by "This" to a mental entity called a "thought" or "concept" of a rose. We compare the perceived individual to that which is meant by the word "rose," namely, what it is to be a rose, what something is when it is a rose. What it is to be a rose is the object of the concept of a rose, the term of the relation "thought about" or "conceived of," a term thought about or conceived of by means of a mental entity, a thought or a concept, we postulate precisely as the vehicle for our conscious relation to what it is to be a rose (not for our conscious relation to the vehicle).

To see in the judgment . . . a comparison between the mental word and the object thought about, and an affirmation of the mental word's conformity with the object, would be to involve oneself in the Cartesian path of thought in spite of oneself. On the contrary, the thing is declared to be what the object (the predicate) attained in the mental word is. (97, n. 2)

To say that "This is a rose" is true, that this statement "conforms to reality," is to say that the thing made object by our use of "this" and one of the things made object by our use of "rose" is identically the same thing. There is an identity between what some sensed singular -- objectified by "this" -- is and that for which we use the word "rose," namely, a certain kind of thing. We are related to that for which we use the word "rose" by means of a concept; for we introduce "concept" into the vocabulary to refer to a psychological modification enabling us to understand that for which words

are used. But the knowledge telling us that "This is a rose" is true is not knowledge of a relation between a concept and a sensed thing; it is knowledge of a relation between an object of a concept and a sensed thing, that is, between what is objectified when we understand the kind of thing meant by "rose" and a sensed thing. And that knowledge is knowledge of an identity relation between these two terms, not something short of identity like mere "representation."

The "conformity" in truth is between an identification, in the the mind, and an identity, in things. A statement effects an identification between objects, not an identification of them as objects, since they are distinct as objects, but an identification of them as more than objects, as things. When the objects so identified are identical as things, the statement so identifying them corresponds to things.

There is the correspondence between statements and reality meant by "truth" when there is nothing short of identity between what is made an object in diverse ways in the statement and what exists extraobjectively as a thing. In judgment, we do not compare a thought with a thing, we identify an object to which we are related by means of a thought and a thing. Here "thought" is taken in the sense of a psychological modification that we acquire. We speak of having the thought, say, of a lion, because we are consciously related to the object, lion, and we postulate the thought as the psychological modification that we acquire by means of which we have that conscious relation.

An object of concept can be called an "intentional object" if we do not mean by this that the nature so objectified is something "intentional" as opposed to physical. The mode of being objectified by our concept of a lion is a physical mode of being. That is its nature as a thing. And when this physical nature becomes an object, it remains a physical mode of being but acquires a new status; while remaining what it is, it acquires a mode of presence that is nonidentical with its physical nature. No contradiction occurs, since what is an object is always

necessarily more than, and hence other than, just an object, always has a nature beyond the state that constitutes it "an object." In this case, what acquires an intentional status is something that, in itself, is physical.

xxx thing/object distinction, February 26, 91

Maritian's introduction of that distinction in the first paragraph of section 10 of "the degrees of knowledge", pages 90 and 91: it would probably be pushing it to read Maritian at the beginning of the paragraph this way: "if the foregoing is true, we *must* distinguish," or "the same thing *must* be ..." that is, it would be pushing it to say he is implying a signified doubt at the beginning of the paragraph. For he later describes "the tragedy of modern noetic" as beginning with the separation of objects from things.

Rather what he is doing is unfolding explicitly what could only be implicit before the kind of reflection he performed when analyzing truth. Now we can recognize that there is a distinction between what is true of things in consciousness and in reality. But if that distinction is true we can raise the skeptical question in signified act. That is what he does at the end of the paragraph. It is there that he raises the question that the introduction to the chapter explained could be legitimately answered, namely, the skeptical question in signified act. And answering it will answer the skeptics, because it is the same question they raise in exercised act.

In the discussion of truth preceding the introduction of the thing/object distinction, Maritian reaches the conclusions he reaches in chapter one of "reflections". That is, he says that to understand truth we must distinguish the way things are in the understanding and the way things are in themselves. (But at the end of the discussion of truth in "degrees" he wants to add something to the analysis of "reflections". He doesn't just want to leave it at *conformity* between thought and

thing. He wants to bring in the prior *identity* between objects and things the knowledge of which is required for the knowledge of the conformity between thought and things.)

But in "degrees" making the distinction between the way things are in thought and the way things are in things raises another problem the skeptic can ask, a problem that is not exactly the problem raised in chapter one of "of reflections." Now the skeptic can ask, since things must live a different life in the mind in order to be known, how can we be sure of how (or if) what exists in the mind relates to things. To know the conformity of thought and thing (truth), we must know the relation of what exists in the mind in a different way from the way it (would) exist in things to what exists outside the mind.

As a result of the reflection that defines truth, or was necessary for that, we can form the notion of an object, of the term of a knowledge relation. But what is the relation of what we can know call an object to extramental existence? We must know that relation to be able to know truth as previously described.

(The fact that there are differences between thought and thing means that there are differences between objects and thing. But we do not assert those differences of thing. They pertain to objects as objects, not as things.)

March 19, 91

The analysis of truth shows what truth claims to be on the pre-conceptual level. Without that claim, that is, the claim to be measured by things, the claim that thought is measured by things, the skeptical question cannot arise. The skeptical question presupposes that "natural" ("reflections") claim. So we need the analysis of truth to see where the skeptical claim comes from, and once we see where it comes from we can see that it is self refuting since reflective "objects" must be identical with pre-reflective "things."

In "reflections" he didn't talk about purifying common sense but showed how the "critical" problem arises and our rows "naturally", that is, the problem of the need for sorting out the identity and diversity between thought and thing to make knowledge of truth possible. In "degrees" it becomes the problem of the relation of objects to things and what is "from thought" in "reflections" become characteristics of objects of as objects, that is, characteristics of that which is also the thing. Hence the "nub of the critical problem" is the problem we always have with us because it is the "natural" problem of "reflections."

May 5, 91

Truth is conformity of thought to something that is what it is independently of what our thoughts about it are; otherwise contradictions could be true, as Maritain says in "reflections on intelligence". But if and when truth occurs something beyond thought must also be "in" thought. That is, something beyond thought must also be "that which we are thinking and judging about," that is, must also be an object. And if and when there is truth, the same thing must be a thing and be "set before the mind," that is, be what our thoughts are about. So 1 condition for truth is that we have objects that are also things.

Modern epistemology implies that there are pure objects. Maritain recognizes that Husserl and idealism are not subjectivism. Husserl and Berkeley before him believe consciousness is a relation to objects, but truth requires a relation between those objects and things. If we can know the truth, we must know that what we are thinking about, objects, are also things. And if we know that, we know that our thoughts are conformed to things.

If there is truth, then what is beyond thought and the mind must also be terms of relations like being affirmed, etc., must be that which is term of relations like being affirmed, etc.

What Maritain is saying in his analysis of truth starting from commonsense: we do not assert that things have the properties that attach to them in thought and allow them to be thought about.

Page 98: "in order that judgment made proceed in that way, it is necessary that every object set before the mind be set there is something able to exist outside the mind." So objects are objectified, meanings, predicates, are objectified as aspects of, features of, possible existents. Therefore being, the capacity for existence, is logically included in every concept. That is, every objective concept logically includes the objective concept of something able to exist.

Note that the terms of logical relations are primarily extralogical values. Color is logically included in red, but color is an extra logical value. Likewise, existence is logically included in every other objective concept because every other objective concept is so objectified as to be able to be used in a judgment. "So objectified as to be able to be used in the judgment" could be read in some sort of exclusively logical sense. That is, it might be understood to refer only to a mode of objectification, for example, the way that the forma totius is only a logical mode of objectification.

No, being, real extramental existence, is included not just as something logical but as the term of a logical relation, somewhat as the extralogical value, color, is the term of a logical relation to the extralogical value, red.

And this quotation from page 98 of "degrees of knowledge" provides the confirmation for my footnotes in a couple of places, including in "the problem of thing and object in Maritain," in the section on evidence, that the position he later takes about judgment in "approaches without fetters" implicitly and probably unintentionally contradicts his much more perceptive analysis of judgment in "the degrees of knowledge." I am thinking of the section on the intuition of being in "approaches." There he does not seem to appreciate that from the beginning every

object set before the mind is set there is something able to have extraobjective existence. Or another way to put it is that, implicitly and unintentionally, he is denying that being is that which is first known and is that to which all other concepts are resolved.

Xxx Maritain - T/O - BIG- AA 7-10-91

Quote Simon on the difference between the correspondence between thought and thing and the correspondence between object and thing. That is the point Maritain learned from Noel's article on the Intelligence and the Real! To know the truth requires knowing the relation between the objects thought about, not the relation between thought and the objects thought about. If we know the relation between the objects thought about, the relation of our thought to those objects follows!

So Maritain starts with a definition of truth in terms of a conformity between thought (i.e., a construct of thought, a proposition) and things. But then how do we know truth? He realized between Reflexions and DOK that knowing the truth required knowing that the object thought about, not the thought, was identical with a thing. So that is why, in DOK, he says a new problem, the problem of thing and object, confronts us. Why does it confront us? Because that is how the truth is KNOWN! This interpretation is confirmed by Simon's treatment.

But of course, objects are not always identical with things, because propositions are not always true. But the next sections of DOK look at this from different angles. First, from the angle of what is "analytically" first in intellectual knowledge. Objects are not always identical with things. But in the case of the principle of non-contradiction, there is no possibility of lack of truth, i.e., of lack of identity of objects with things. Likewise, there is no possibility of our primary

concept, being, not being identical with things, at least with possible things.

Next, if and when sensation occurs, there is identity between the object and an actual thing.

Next, the argument can be extended to intellectual knowledge in general, not just our "analytically first" intellectual knowledge. Every concept represents a possible being. And every judgment requires identity between object and things. So the end of that section goes to prove the assertion made at the beginning, namely, that truth requires thing/object identity.

In all these cases, he is saying that there is a formal object attained. If not, the consciousness to be evaluated in terms of the goal it reaches would not even exist to be evaluated. But in each case, analysis of the formal object and the way it is attained will show that the formal object is attained as a feature of a material object. We can distinguish the formal object only as a means by which something more than itself is attained.

But also note that when Maritain justifies his claim that the t/o problem is the nub of the critical problem, he does not make use of the f/m object aspect of the t/o distinction. He only makes use of the more-than-an-object aspect of the distinction. "(We do not eat 'that which has been eaten'; we eat bread.") That is more basic than the f/m object aspect, because it is presupposed to calling f/m objects "objects."

It's almost as if Maritain saw the importance of the t/o distinction from Noel and then looked for a traditional "justification" for using the distinction. He found that justification in the f/m object distinction. But the latter distinction had gone beyond Aquinas by the time of Cajetan and Poincot. Poincot, in particular, emphasized the "logical" character of the abstraction that distinguishes the sciences. That is, by the time of Poincot, the logical nature of the characteristics objects acquire as objects was recognized. So the t/o distinction was the one Maritain needed to express Noel's insights, and the t/o distinction developed, historically, out

of the f/m object distinction. But the t/o distinction went beyond the latter distinction, even by the times of the commentators.

xxx formal and material objects, March 9, 91

In asking what we are doing when we call something an "object," he is telling us, in effect, don't just think about what you learned about formal and material objects when you read Aquinas, Cajetan and Poincaré. Think about something deeper, something presupposed to what they say. And since it is presupposed to what Aquinas says, historical consistency with Aquinas is not the issue. Aquinas cannot say what he says without doing what Maritain says he does, namely, doing whatever is necessary to call something an "object," whether a formal or a material object.

Another argument that the thing/object distinction is not just the material object/formal object distinction: the thing/object distinction is essential to the problem of our knowledge of truth. This goes beyond the material/formal object distinction, at least beyond its application to distinguishing diverse modes of knowing, sensory, physical, mathematical and metaphysical.

xxx thing and object, January 27, 91

Maritain extends the distinction between thing and object beyond Poincaré's use of it to the question of the nature of truth. He also extends it to 2 other points from Aquinas, judgment and the doctrine of the two existences from *De Ente*.

The "correspondence" of the correspondence theory of truth is the *effect* of a strict identity between what is an object and what is more than an object.

December 8, 90

To state that an object is whatever of a thing is made manifest to knowledge is true but does not show us how the thing/object distinction AIDS us in solving the critical problem and can even appear circular as an attempt to solve that problem. What is missing is just what it means to call something and "object." What we achieve in calling it that is to relate it to knowledge. We "throw it against" knowledge and the knower, as the Latin root of "object" suggests.

But while Maritain's analysis of thing and object is consistent with the scholastic use of the material object/formal object distinction, his analysis goes further, or rather, deeper. He asks us to consider what we are doing when we call something an "object" of consciousness; what conditions are necessary for calling something an "object." The subject-object polarity is a fundamental fact of consciousness, encountered in our reflective self-awareness. We can ask epistemological questions only because we are aware of our own consciousness. And this reality we call "consciousness" is a relational reality, a way of relating to terms non-identical with itself that we call its "objects." Maritain saw that the conditions necessary for recognizing the situation we call consciousness's relation to objects provide a reduction to absurdity of the positions of the skeptic and the idealist.

Page 93, second paragraph: why is it "self-contradictory to suppress the thing"? Because later on this page he explains that "object" has a reflexive meaning. It follows that "object" implies a primary, non-reflexive meaning i.e. "thing."

Third paragraph: "the object is a correlative of a knowing subject," that is, not just of a subject but of a knowing subject, a correlative of that subject's knowledge. A thing "precisely takes the name object from the fact that it is presented to the mind." Maritain is answering the question "what are we doing when we call something and "object"?" We are relating it to knowledge; we are expressing

secondary reflexive knowledge, knowledge that pre-supposes that something else, something other than its being an object and prior to its being an object, is known about the object.

Maritain asks us to consider what we are doing when we call objects "objects," what kind of knowledge we are expressing and what the conditions of that knowledge are. This is the basis of his argument that the conditions for even raising epistemological questions can be used to demonstrate, indirectly, direct epistemological realism.

This interpretation is confirmed starting on page 107, section 18, where he announces that the thing/object problem is the nub of the critical problem. In that context, he accuses opponents of thinking that "naïveté is to start with an act of knowledge about things rather than an act of knowledge about knowledge." So to start with an act of knowledge about knowledge, rather than about something other than knowledge, is to separate objects from things. Obviously is contradictory to say we only have knowledge of knowledge. And to have no knowledge of something other than knowing that it is known is to separate objects from things.

He goes on to explain the thing/object problem by saying one cannot think about a "thought thing" (so and "object" is a "thought" thing; so to call it an object is to relate it to knowledge, as in "a seen thing," "a named thing," of "referred to thing," etc.) until after one has thought about a "thinkable" thing, that is, a thing which by what it actually or possibly is is potentially thought about and able to be thought about; so that what it is is not an actual state of being thought about but is it that which acquires a state of being thought about. It can't be something thought unless it is *something*, that is, something about which we can ask whether it exists or not.

"The cogitatum of the first cogito is not cogitatum but ens." "We do not eat what has been eaten; we eat bread." Again, the object is the "cogitatum," "the

eaten". That is what we do when we call it an "object," we relate it to knowledge as we do when we call it a "cogitatum," "something seen", "something referred to," something named", ""something described," etc. we are doing to the thing known as thing the same thing we do when we call bread "the eaten."

Page 94, second paragraph, back to the order of Maritain's argument. "The process of knowledge consists of making it (a thing) an object. Every act of knowledge tells us this is so." He then goes through different kinds of acts of knowledge. Here on page 94, knowledge by concepts; a 95, knowledge by sensation; and a 96, knowledge by judgment. Remember that "knowledge" means awareness.

On page 94 he says "being is the first object attained by our intellect." The implicit argument is this. Every object is more-than-and-object. No matter what this more-and-and-object is in a given case, it logically includes being. In every case, being is there on the more-than-and-object side of the object. For example, whatever is in motion is moved by another." (We must keep that kind of example in mind.) That proposition says "if something is in motion, if there exists something in motion, if some existent is in motion, or if a moving thing exists..." so what is objectified in the concepts of that proposition is motion as a feature of a possible being. That which terminates the relation of being conceived is something eligible to exist.

Since being is what is first presented to the intellect in any act, it is presented before being an "object" and is something belonging to what ever can only be later called an "object." So (1) we know that calling something and "object" is secondary to knowing it as something else, and (2) we know that this something else we know it as before we know it as an object is an actual or possible existent, because (3) being is included in all our primary objects.

December 20 4, 90

Second paragraph on page 94: maybe the sequence of arguments through page 97, section 13, is not (1) objects of concept are identical with things; (2) objects of sensation are identical with things; (3) objects of judgment are identical with things. The second paragraph on page 94 begins with a pronouncement that every act of knowledge tells us that objects are identical with things. That statement introduces *both* this paragraph and the following paragraphs, that is, both sections 12 and 13.

But in this paragraph the argument focuses on the fact that what is analytically first in intellectual knowledge is capable of real existence, because that primary object is the capacity for real existents, being. Then the paragraph argues that objects incapable of existence outside the mind, beings of reason, are objectified only after being, after the capacity for real existence, because that capacity is the primary object without which secondary objects, beings of reason, could not be constructed.

Also page 96, section 13, is not just about judgment. Its first point ("on the one hand,...") is about objects of concept. Then ("on the other hand, ...") it goes on to talk about objects of judgment.

Maritain - Thobj Article - Class idea - AA 1-13-92

What if someone were to challenge my claim that the lines following the "Crux of the problem" statement are explanations of it. What if they said that the explanation of that statement came in the preceding section, that statement merely summarizes the preceding, and what follows is a new thought?

My answer: OK, delete that statement from the beginning of the new section and read the new section. Is the new section or is it not explaining the thing/ object distinction (problem) and why it refutes idealism. You do not have to read very far, the second paragraph, to see him bring in thing/object as if it needed no introduction but was being discussed all along. He brings it in again the same way, and in the

context of idealism, a paragraph or two later.

xxx how Maritain's critical realism works, April 29, 89

My thinking before I read chapter three of "the degrees of knowledge": I am aware of an object. What the object is is other than what my awareness of it is, other than my conscious relation to it. Because my consciousness needs a term, it must be consciousness of something. And because my awareness of what consciousness is depends on my awareness of what the object of consciousness is, my explicit awareness of consciousness is a secondary act of consciousness that examines the primary act whose object is something other than consciousness itself. I can make consciousness my object only because I first have consciousness of an object other than consciousness, that is, only because there is first an object for consciousness to be consciousness of.

Likewise, the object is other than myself in so far as what I am is a being with consciousness. In so far as I know myself, I know myself as a knower; I am aware of myself as a conscious being. I am aware of my hand as belonging to me because I am conscious through my hand. So the being I am reflexively aware of includes the hand. In other words, the content of "I", what I mean by "I", is "a knower, a conscious being." Because I become aware of myself, I make myself an object by making consciousness my object. So the original object of consciousness is other than both my consciousness of it and of myself in so far as "myself" means "a conscious being".

At that time, I was asking whether I could know things as they exist outside of my consciousness. I was asking the question in two ways: is the existence of things other than their being known, and if so, can I know them as they exist outside of my consciousness. But both questions presuppose my awareness of objects. I

cannot ask about what I can know unless I am in the situation of being acquainted with what knowledge, in the sense of consciousness, is. Likewise the evidence that answers these questions must be found in an examination of that consciousness an acquaintance with which is presupposed to be asking of the question.

Here, the first liberating thing that Maritain taught me (or confirmed my intuition by showing how it was justified) was that one could argue for realism on the basis of that primary evidence (indeed the existence of that evidence as presupposed to the question was a crucial part of the argument). (This goes beyond "reflections on intelligence" where he in a sense "presupposes" what is given naturally. He here gives a way of showing that we must presuppose certain facts as given naturally, that is, he adds this to the arguments of "reflections".)

You could prove realism. But you could do it without becoming an indirect realist. The realism would not be indirect because the argument for it would be indirect, a reduction to absurdity. The conclusion of the argument could be direct realism because the argument would be indirect. So he showed how my intuition was justified. The positive answer to the question of whether I could know things as they exist outside my consciousness is self-evident. But I should be able to articulate its self evidence.

That intuition was that realism could be defended by the original data presupposed by asking epistemological questions. That data was awareness of consciousness as a relation to an object which, since it was a term of consciousness prior to and other than the epistemological awareness, was not identical with the consciousness. (The existence of a cause is other than the existence of an effect. Yes, consciousness is an existence for its specifying cause, the object, but the object is a potency for another kind of existence, the existence found in sensation.)

So the data presupposed was a bipolar relationship where there was a relation of consciousness terminated by something that was other than the consciousness of

it. (Terminated simply means the object is the relatum of the relation.) Here I might have, but may not have, just noted that one of the "whats" that I was aware of and were other than my awareness of them was the existence of objects, that is, was that which answered to the meanings of my terms "real existence", as opposed to merely imagined or conceived. If that was not among the "whats" I was aware of, I would not have those terms of my vocabulary. That sounds Wittgensteinian, but Maritain gave me an argument very close to that.

In any case, my original presupposed data includes awareness of objects other than awareness, objects other than awareness without which I could not be aware of awareness. All along the heart of my original data appeared to me to be the presence of "objects" other than awareness. Maritain showed me that the original data included the fact that those "objects" are more than objects. That when real existence is present it is one of the values that is "more than an object". (That is, I may not be certain that I am not hallucinating, but if it exists, its existence is not to be perceived.)

How did Maritain show me this? Because by describing them as "objects" I was already relating them to what was known secondarily, to consciousness, and relating them to what I was able to know they were other than. By describing them as objects I was relating them to what I was able to know as known secondarily and able to know as other than what is known primarily. So what was given and necessarily given was a state later describable as being "more than given". When what we are aware of is what we call "real existence", it is also other than our consciousness of it, insofar as we are conscious of consciousness. And this real existence is what Maritain's reduction to absurdity showed to fall between the cracks of Husserl's reduction.

But nothing is ever that simple in philosophy. Objects are other than consciousness insofar as I am aware of them and of consciousness. But maybe there

is more to consciousness and to objects than I'm aware of. Maybe that more includes the fact that to be for them is to be known, that their existence and mine is one. Maybe we are all phases in the consciousness of a transcendental ego. Also what about hallucination, the subjectivity of colors, etc..

(Regarding the latter question, the same doctrine of Maritain, the distinction between thing and object, answered them. So the intuition which showed that objects were more than objects also explained the subjectivity of knowledge, that is, the subjective aspects of knowledge that make skepticism and idealism tempting.)

And the doctrine that "objects" were described as such by relating them to something other than what they could be originally described as showed that when real existence was the object, it was other than our consciousness of it. So if to exist was to be known, a meaning for "existence" different from our original meaning must be being used. (An equivocation.) And ultimately, reflecting on the thing/object unity-in-distinction lead to the argument against idealism in chapter two of "causal realism".

So the thing/object doctrine not only showed me how realism could be justified indirectly but also preserved the subjective side of knowledge. It did justice to both sides of knowledge.

Maritain's argument against Husserl's idealism is not just a paradigm case argument, despite any appearances to the contrary. Like the other aspects of his epistemological argumentation, it is based on what is presupposed by the asking of epistemological questions. In this case, what is presupposed is the concept of the real existence of a thing, or of a thing-in-itself. Maritain shows that Husserl's argument destroys its own presuppositions.

Another liberating aspect of Maritain's epistemology was his emphasis that our primary certitudes (now the question is skepticism toward truth rather than idealism with reference to existence) are necessary truths about *possible*

existence. One importance of this is that these truths become available for the indirect proofs of other epistemological truths. This gives a different dimension to the "Wittgensteinian" aspects of Maritain's argumentation. Those aspects only go so far. To be understood they need to be put in a context of arguments based on necessary truths that are more than logical truths.

This is especially true of my final defense of perceptual realism and the response to the skeptical argument from hallucination. That defense relies on necessary causal truths as the inductive basis for deciding whether we are hallucinating or not. And could we always be hallucinating, that is, could we be in and hallucination tank? Truths about the final causality of knowledge and about the causal evidence available to achieve that final goal show that it is **totally** unreasonable to believe we are in and hallucination tank. The goal of knowledge makes it totally unreasonable to reject the only evidence for real existence that we have. And we can know (have certitude caused by evidence sufficient to exclude the opposite from truth) that it is totally unreasonable to believe we are in a tank.

Here "totally" is meant to distinguish this conclusion from the particular conclusions that we might not now be hallucinating about that pink elephant over there or that we might be hallucinating about that pink elephant that appears to be over there. We certainly can have sufficient inductive evidence to know that it is unreasonable to believe that part of our present experience is or is not and hallucination. But we can also know that it would be totally unreasonable to believe (know that it is **necessarily true** that it would be unreasonable to believe) that all of our experiences have been hallucinations. For we can know that the evidence of experience, governed by necessary truths on which inductive reasoning is based, is the only possible kind of evidence we can have to achieve the goal of knowing what exists.

Notice also that even if we were in and hallucination tank, we would still know

directly by sense experience that the exterior world at least exists, as Aquinas says. We just would not know what kind of things make up that world, other than the fact that they are physical things acting on our sensory capacities.

January 5, 91

At the end of critique using only *signified* doubt, I have new knowledge. I grasp the truth of propositions I had not formulated before. I do not need these propositions to be justifiably certain of the external world. But they express the nature of that certitude and why the opposite (doubt of justified belief) is not possible. Critical realism results in a *philosophic* (Gilson's term) understanding of the veracity of my knowing powers.

There must be a way to prove the veracity of knowledge, not because it needs proof but precisely because it doesn't need proof. There must be a way to prove that it doesn't need proof, to show (to state why) it doesn't need proof and to state it by means of facts we cannot not be aware of by being aware of consciousness, and to show that we cannot not be aware of those facts by being aware of consciousness.

We cannot not be aware that objects are more-than-objects, that if they really exist, as opposed to merely being imagined or conceived, their existence is not to be known and that when we are sensing them, they really exist.

We must be able to (1) described that which we cannot not know when we know consciousness and describe it in a way that (2) shows that we cannot not be aware of the veracity of our powers by (3) showing it in terms of what the opponent cannot not be aware of, cannot not agree to be true in order to state his own position.

But if I can describe what I find on reflection in such a way as to show that one must describe the object of reflection as an act bearing on existence, why is this not a proof of realism of the kind that should not be possible, that is, a proof that

goes from thought to thing? Because it is only an indirect proof, a negative proof showing that we can deny realism only by contradicting ourselves, that is, contradicting some truth we need to be aware of in order to state that consciousness does not attain the real. For example, we need to be aware that consciousness is of something and therefore of something other than itself; it is not a relation to itself. We cannot not be aware of this because our reflective act is a relation to something other than itself, namely, our first nonreflexive act; and so our first act, if it truly is an awareness -- and that is and must be the hypothesis of the question, the presupposition that generates the problem, the presupposition without which there is no problem -- that act is also of the other than itself.

(And there are other presuppositions that the opponent must know beforehand that make his position self refuting. For example, he presupposes an idea of what truth is and he presupposes a standard for truth judging; otherwise he could not doubt whether that standard is met. And so on.)

July 9, 87

Before reading "degrees of knowledge": consciousness is a relation to *objects*; knowledge is objective; the object dominates; awareness of the object is prior to self-awareness; self-awareness is awareness of the awareness of *objects*. Then in "the degrees of knowledge" I found out that by calling them "objects," we relate them to knowledge; hence all along they were more-than-objects. From the very beginning they were more than objects and necessarily so, essentially so.

And real existence is found in the "object," that is, in that which is more than an object. Real existence appears in it, appears as "objective" as its size, color, shape, etc. are in it. Real existence is not equivalent to existence in awareness, because awareness is of more-than-object and this more-than-an-object includes existence in its, the-more-than-an-object, character as more than an object.

Describing it as an "object" is already secondary, reflexive, derivative,. In describing them as "objects," we already leave something out that *is* given, is there, is in our consciousness. Yes, the perceived object may be an hallucination and only appear to really exist, but already we know that if it really exists, as opposed to being merely in hallucination, its existence is other than being an object; existence, if real, is in it insofar as it is something that is more-than-and-object.

Knowledge of thing object identity is not even possible unless objects are what the scholastics called formal objects and things are what they called material objects.

From there Maritain goes onto argue that formal objects do in fact present material objects and that formal objects are unthinkable except as doing so for a variety of reasons, reasons which differ somewhat for intellectual and sensory objects. E.g., merely contemplating the truth of a statement requires understanding each object as presenting something potentially more than an what is objectified in this way, and hence potentially identical with another object.

Thing-object, material and formal objects, Nov. 20, 94

Maritain wants to argue that the object is a feature, an aspect, of something more than an object, of something that is more than an object. But that it is a feature is given. He argues that by this feature something more than an object is given or is reached. So at least it is a feature of something that potentially has more features, because it, that which is so objectified, is a possible possessor, exerciser, of an existence that is more than being an object, and hence more than what is objectified in this way, and hence potentially has more features.

June 18, 89

"Statements about the psychological and conditions for awareness of objects don't

tell us anything about the nature of the objects, that is, about what is known about the nature of the objects." (That statement may be a paraphrase of myself.) Notice, however, that such statements can tell us about the object as object. So when we say such statements don't tell us about the object, we are saying they don't tell us anything about the nature of the thing we are aware of. That is, we are recognizing that that which we are aware of it is more-than "that which we are aware of". We are recognizing that the objective pole of the bipolarity of consciousness is known as more-than-an-object from the beginning. We are recognizing that its status as more than an object is a necessary aspect of that which we are aware of. Recognizing that being more than an object is necessarily "attached" to our objects.

Why? Because calling them "objects" is already a secondary way of describing them and one that presupposes a content transcending what is expressed by this secondary way. (And this "more" by its self-identity a capacity for existence, which therefore is also "more".) But does this add anything to the description of bipolarity given by others? Yes, it adds an accurate concept, precise concepts, objects as objects or as things, that allow us to grasp necessities, necessary epistemological truths, and truths about existence as such pertinent to epistemology, that is, that existence is other than being an object.

Also those concepts allow us to sort out what belongs to things as things and as objects, sort out what necessarily longs to things as things and as objects. Also these concepts allow us to affirm the necessary identity of thing an object, both solving epistemological problems and making precise the necessary truths about the nature of truth.

For example, these concepts do not by themselves show us how we distinguish hallucination, when things only appear to have real as opposed to imaginary existence, from real existence. But these concepts allow us to see a priori that there must be way, since to appear as really existing, or as an object of a

genuine as opposed to imitation perception, is to appear to have a characteristic that is necessarily more-than-being-and-object. And the objects without which we would have no other objects, namely, objects of perception, necessarily appear with that characteristics, since those objects are causally primary in cognition.

In describing X as an object, we are describing it as term of a relation to the subjective pole, describing it by a relation which presupposes a content in X that is other than being a term of this relation and cannot be reduced to being a term of this relation because that content is causally prior to the relation that is, causally prior to the content we become aware of when we become aware of the relation.

We say skeptics and idealists deny the "objective" character of knowledge, or perception, or concepts, or true, or whatever the particular problem epistemological we are discussing is. When we say she denies the objective character of something, we mean she denies that it is a relation to what is more-than-an-object. In other words, we intuitively express the identity of thing an object, the necessary identity of thing an object. To deny the objective character of something associated with consciousness is not explicitly to deny consciousness's subject-object character. We are denying consciousness's attainment of the object pole, it's achieving the goal of attaining the object pole, it's value as an attainment of the object pole, because it reduces the object pole to being **only** the object pole and we see intuitively that the object pole is **more-than-an-object**.

Why do we see this? Because calling it the object pole implies necessarily that it is more-than-an-object.

The argument as so far presented is far from being the whole of Maritain's defense of realism, but it is the necessary presupposition of the rest of his argument. That more is needed is obvious from the fact that the thing/object analysis so far given applies as much to the objects of imagination or conception, which need not

really exist outside of awareness, as to the objects of sense perception, which (presumably) do have extramental existence. And has the argument even proven that, if something really exists, as opposed to being merely imagined or conceived, that existence is something other than being an object of knowledge? Granted, what is known, at any level of consciousness, is known as more than "known." Does it follow that this something more has an existence independent of consciousness. For example, what is seen is not seen as "seen," it is seen as red or some other color. But it does not follow that color has an existence in things independent of our perception.

Maritain's answer is that existence is the primary value included in our objects as more than objects; existence is included in what is known insofar as what is known is more than "what is known." Therefore, even though not all our objects really exist or are known to really exist, if and when they really exist, that existence is other than being known. Furthermore, sense experience lets us know that its objects really exist, even if perceived qualities like colors do not exist in things as they are perceived. We do have objects that are not capable of extramental existence. These are beings of reason. But we can have beings of reason as objects only by thinking them on the pattern of real being, and so only in dependence of our awareness of real being.

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March 11, 91

The opponent says "alright, the object is other than our consciousness of it, but could our consciousness of it be its existence? The object that is other than consciousness includes a relation to existence; a relation to existence is part of the object as other than consciousness.

September 20, 91

Reflection reveals awareness as aware of having the finality of attaining something other than itself, where "something" means some actual or possible existent, because that is what awareness is basically, namely, an existent itself, and awareness is known as a relation to what is other and, therefore, to a different actual or possible existent. The feature that most basically makes the object, the other, what it is and so most basically makes it other than knowledge is existence, because every object is an actual or possible existent. Its relation to existence is most fundamental to what it is and so most fundamental to its being other than knowledge. (Most formal, most specifying, for its being the other that it is the goal of awareness to attain.)

Page 100, second paragraph: "it is impossible to think of a pure object separated from a being for itself." The contrast is between being for itself and being an object (a pure object). So to be an object is to be for us, as opposed to just being for itself. But what exists for us must be something; it can't be a pure for-us in contrast to a for-itself; for then it would be nothing in itself. That's my argument against idealism (to be is to be known) from "causal realism".

Awareness that something is a term of a relation of awareness is what occurs in reflective self-awareness. In reflection, we recognize the existence of a previous state of awareness, and since awareness is awareness of something, in reflection, we recognize that something is the term of a previous act of awareness. But what about the prior, prereflective awareness of something, the prior awareness without which there would not be a reflective awareness? What is it aware of?

In our epistemological reflection on the bipolarity of consciousness, it is proper to use the word "object" to distinguish that which is known from the knowing subject.

June 4, 89

As Maritian points out, in modern philosophy we continue to speak of truths being "objectively" true and of "objective" facts. That is, it seems natural to us to use "objective" to describe things precisely as what I've referred to above as "more than objects". Why?

We are talking about the object pole of the subject-object polarity. And we intuitively recognize that in being aware of objects as distinct from being aware of the subject, we are aware of values that are more than mere relations to the subject. "Object" is the natural way to emphasize this because it refers to the opposite of the subjective pole. Hence in recognizing the distinction between the subject pole and the object pole we are (implicitly) recognizing the independence of that which we

distinguish from the subject by calling it an object, and so we use "objective" to designate that independence.

We *distinguish* the known from the subject of knowledge by calling them objects. So in being aware of the bipolarity of consciousness, we recognize the distinction of the object from the subject in the act of, and for the same reason as, we recognize it as related to the subject. That's the kind of relation being-an-object is. What Maritain does is show that we can use this necessary fact of our primary *reflective* awareness to justify calling them *things* as well as objects. That is, that which makes it natural to refer to "objective" facts is the same as that which justifies calling them "more than objects".

June 6, 89

When we describe one term of the bipolarity we are aware of as being "objects" we are already expressing secondary knowledge of them. So we must have a primary knowledge also. If not, there would be no secondary knowledge. "Things" expresses that primary knowledge, primary awareness. Awareness of ourselves as aware is primary awareness of ourselves, but secondary awareness of things. But we use "object", "objective" to point out their knowledge-transcendent character.

May 15, 2005

In "an introduction to philosophy" Maritain states that the question of the distinction of essence from existence is the most important philosophical question in itself but the problem of universals is the most important philosophical question quoad nos, that is, from the point of view of our ability to know truths about what exists. After "the degrees of knowledge" we can see that the problem of universals falls under, and is the case of, the distinction of what belongs to things as things and things as

objects. So, although the intuition of being is a necessary condition for metaphysics, it is not a sufficient condition. For we must properly conceptualize that intuition. And the most the most significant problems we face in trying to conceptualize a properly come from the unity-in-distinction of things objects. That is, from the fact that the identity of our objects with what exists extra objectively must always coexist with their distinction, and vice versa.

Thing/object

7-25--91

When I attribute "man" to an individual, universality is a characteristic attaching to what I attribute but not entering into what I attribute. For it attaches to what I attribute, the word-function of "man," from a perspective that differs from the perspective in which I am attributing it. Universality is a logical relation describing what is known from the point of view of the knowledge relation by which it is known, describing the term of a knowledge relation from the point of view of the knowledge relation, not describing what the term must be in itself in order to be the term of a knowledge relation.

Universality is a logical relation attaching to what is known in order that it may be what is known, but it does not belong to what the term of the knowledge relation is prior to being known. It does not enter into what the term is known to be in itself. Abstraction is a logical relation characterizing being as term of a knowledge relation, but it does not enter into what the term of the knowledge relation is nonreflectively known to be, what it is known to be in itself. Therefore it is not in contradiction to the concreteness that we know being necessarily possesses whenever it is actually exercised. Abstraction is a logical relation attaching to what is known in order that it may be what is known, but abstraction does not enter into what the term of the knowledge relation is known to be when it is so known, i.e,

when it is known in the way characterized by abstraction. Otherwise, the term would never be the term, for it would be altered by the knowledge relation; and the term of the knowledge relation would be something else, the result of the alteration.

Abstraction and universality do not enter into what is FIRST known about the term of the knowledge relation that endows the term with abstraction or universality. For if they entered into what is first known, there would be an infinite regress, since they are logical relations resulting from a knowledge relation. So if they are first known, there is another knowledge relation preceding the first.

They are features we can attribute to the known resulting from its being the term of a knowledge relation. But what is first known does not result from its being the term of a knowledge relation. So they do not enter into what is first known. They do not enter into what it must be in order that it become the term of a knowledge relation, namely, something other than what is described by "a term of a knowledge relation."

April 21, 91

The abstract character of the concepts of being and existence do not prevent us from knowing that being and existence are concrete. They are that which allow us to know on the level of intellectual knowledge that being and existence are concrete unless our concepts are subjectively abstract and universal, they could not be instruments for knowing such truths as that existence are individual and concrete.

xxx Gilson, abstraction, March 1, 91

"Individual" absolutely considered does not include Socrates's individuality, does not include this individual thing. "Concrete" absolutely considered does not include Socrates's concreteness, this individual concrete things, Socrates.

xxx abstraction and the act of existence, February 8, 91

See "Bergsonian philosophy and Thomism" page 307 (against Gilson?).

xxx Gilson, abstraction, March 1, 91

Gilson might object to my defense of abstraction in metaphysics this way. Abstraction as a logical relation derives from its foundation. Its foundation is an act of the mind.

Existence is known by a different act from the act by which essence is known.

Therefore the act by which existence is known does not found a relation of abstraction but at most some other logical relation.

But the act of the mind is not the foundation; the object is. See "Tractatus de signis" page 63, line 20. Also, even if there were some differences between the logical relations occurring to these objects, it would not follow that these relations did not have some things in common. In fact, what diversifies the objects of these distinct acts are different ways from abstracting from matter in the logical sense. The object is the foundation (the act of knowledge is the cause, not the foundation, because it is the object that is related; it is the object that is the relatum.)

December 21, 91,

For a Gilson to say that existence cannot be known by concepts because existence is concrete and concepts are abstract is like saying that a round telescope cannot see a square object, or that a small picture cannot show the shape of a tall building, or its colors, etc., or that a black-and-white photo cannot show the shape of a colored object, or that a multiword sentence cannot describe a simpler object, or that marks on a page cannot accurately describe something different from marks on a page, or that blue Ink. cannot be used to describe red flowers.

xxx abstraction and metaphysics, April 18, 91

How metaphysics abstracts: sensible matter is included in the extension of being, but is not a defining feature of being, a defining characteristic; sensible matter is not part of its intension; sensible matter is not part of the ratio of being. On the other hand, sensible matter is referred to in the definitions of the philosophy of nature. It is not just part of the extension of those definitions.

xxx metaphysics deals with existence as possible, February 28, 91

"Finite existence is contingent." The preceding sentence about the contingency of finite existence is a necessary truth.

xxx is Maritain and essentialist? February 19, 91

Redpath accuses Maritain of being an essentialist because he does not emphasize the primacy of existence the way Gilson does. In fact, Maritain's metaphysics is a metaphysics of the subject, which, for him, is not an essence, not even a complete individual essence.

By means of concepts of possibles (objects) we know subjects (by the identity of object [possible] and thing, we know subjects).

xxx metaphysics and possible existents, March 6, 80

To say that possibility characterizes the manner in which existence is known by metaphysics is not to say it is a property that metaphysics knows about existence as an extra objective value, is not to say that it enters into that which metaphysics knows about existence, is part of that which metaphysics knows, but is a logical property of the condition existence acquires within apprehension, the condition of not being confined to the status of the contingent actualization of this individual existent or these current individual existents.

The condition that existence acquires is the condition of not being objectified

as just the act of all acts in these concrete things, but objectified as the act of all acts in all things that may ever exist or have ever existed. So if it were not objectified in the condition of possibility, we could not know that existence is that which is in no way possible as an extra objective value. For us to know the metaphysical truth that it cannot be in this condition extra mentally, it must be objectified in this condition.

March 7, 80

Possibility is, like universality, a logical characteristic existence acquires as a result of being made an object of knowledge. What metaphysics knows about existence, however, is what is true of it, not as result of being made an object but as an extraobjective value. And just as the universality of our objects is not prevent them from being identical with, and being known to be identical with, what exists outside the mind, so nothing prevents the existence which acquires the characteristic of possibility as a result of being made object from being identical with, and being known to be identical with that which is most actual and things and which in really existent things is no way merely possible.

January 13, 80

Why must metaphysics the deal with possible existence? Because actual existence, except God's, is contingent, and metaphysics deals with necessary truths. See "degrees of knowledge," page 102, note three. Philosophy's truths tell us conditions without which existence would not be possible.

The opposite of a necessary truth is something that is not a possibly existing state of affairs.

In the paragraph at the top of page 92 he talks about making the *value* of intellectual knowledge explicit reflexively. And he emphasizes that possible

metalogical existence is what is primary for intellectual knowledge. So when reading this section we have to keep in mind statements like "whatever is in motion or at rest remain so unless acted on," "whatever changes is caused to change," "water boils at 100 degrees centigrade," etc. The truth of these propositions does not depend on or imply the actual existence of their subjects or predicates. The truth of "water boils at 100 degrees" does not depend on whether there is any water now at that temperature. The actual current existence of water at that temperature is irrelevant to the truth of that kind of statement.

The footnote at the bottom of page 92, note one, is important for illustrating what Maritian said in the introduction to the chapter about starting with what is the primary datum analytically, that is, possible being as expressed in the principle of identity: if something exists, it does not not exist. This primacy results from psychological and logical analysis, that is, the principle of identity is a law of all possible being that is known to be true when anything else is known to be true. The first law is not about being known, about the possibility of being known, but the possibility of being, of having an existence which is presupposed to being an "object of knowledge". This is "the first objective evidence", "the first evidence of direct intuition," referred to on page 108 in the first and second paragraphs.

January 27, 91

Why being and its principles are what are first known analytically. Because being is logically included in all our concepts, whenever any truth is known, whenever the evidence for any truth is known, the evidence for the principles of identity and noncontradiction are known; the evidence for the first principles cannot not be present. In fact, whenever any proposition is proposed, whether it's truth is known or not, the evidence for the first principles must be present. If a proposition is "before the mind," the *evidence* for the first principles is before the mind, is logically

included.

The reason is that the objective concept of being is logically included in every other objective concept, even objective concepts of beings of reason. That objective concept (that ratio or word function) cannot not be present when any object that is part of a judgment is present. That is what Wittgenstein's private language argument shows.

Page 94, second paragraph: "we cannot think the principle of identity without thinking extramental being whose behavior it expresses." That is, the principle of noncontradiction is about being, not about thought. (See Dennehy's quote from Russell in his "basis of certitude" article). Whatever the principle of noncontradiction is about it is about more than being an object, since being an object presupposes something else, and that which it happens to be about and hence is more than being an object is being.

We cannot think the principle of noncontradiction without knowing that we are dealing with the principle about something possibly existing, possibly having real existence, as opposed to merely being conceived or imagine. Nor can we think the principle of noncontradiction without knowing real existence as a value prior in cognition to being known. And not just prior in cognition to being known, but prior in reality to being that which knower A is aware of, prior to being the term of A's relation of awareness. (When we assert that B is known by A, we assert that person A and its knowledge exists; we have not yet asserted that B exists.)

xxx existence in sensation, December 23, 90

Reflexive knowledge does find a real existent, but reflection turns back on acts that attain objects, and the primary act without which there would be no other acts, the primary act from which others derive, is sensation; and sensation presents us with an existing object. So reflection could not find an existing object had sensation,

which already present objects as if existing, had not taken place first. And the possible existence to which other objects of reflected on acts relate is the existence presented by sensation, because that is what verifies the existence of these other objects.

xxx texts from "reflections on the intellect", February 12, 91

The first chapter of "reflections" has a dialectic showing how the problem of truth arises, specifically, that it first arises "naturally," in epistemology without any feigned doubt. It did so in the Greeks.

Page 11: "the first question is what is truth." This makes a specific what Maritain means when he says in the degrees of knowledge that "the question of truth" is the first question. In the latter place he is talking about what is the nature of truth. In the former place he goes on to say that this question is first for determining reflexively the "nature and value of knowledge itself." He also goes on to say that this question comes before the more "profound" question of "what is knowledge."

Page 12: see my written comment. All philosophy is critical because we have to submit all judgment, all "natural judgments" to reflexive critique. So when Gilson says epistemology is not critical only philosophical, we can say that all philosophy is critical. (A marginal comment I make on "the degrees of knowledge" says the same thing.)

Page 17: important. Need to distinguish "that which is from things and that which is from my manner of knowing" in all thought. And "the degrees of knowledge" this becomes distinguishing thing an object.

Important. Starting on page 11, and passim, he uses "object" for "thing" Just

as modern philosophy does.

Page 30: the sense in which Descartes is an idealist, the sense continued by modern philosophy after him: our ideas, like angelic ideas, do not depend on ("des") and are not measured by things.

Page 33: comment. Reflection can recognize that objects are known as more than objects.

Page 39: does he say that epistemology does more than reduce to absurdity? Or does he just mean that a complete theory of knowledge, one which does not just reduce to absurdity, can ultimately be constructed?

Bottom of page: he speaks well of Cardinal Mercier on idealism.

Page 41: a good foreshadowing of the thing object distinction and its use in reducing to absurdity. The next page is even better. A fine description of the method of critique for "the degrees of knowledge".

Page 43: is this where Simon got his idea of a pure object, that is an object that is not an end or an object of action?

Page 44: he cites Aquinas's reduction to absurdity arguments against idealism. (If to be is to be perceived, thought only attains its own states; For what exists exists as a state of consciousness.)

Page 46: a good reduction to absurdity of the view that contradiction is only a law of thought, not of things. If we postulate contradiction in things, we cannot avoid postulating it and thought. (Quotes Garrigou).

Page 47: a good statement of the negative (reduction to absurdity) and positive (philosophical psychology) sides of epistemology. The second is the "justification" (page 48) he referred to earlier.

Page 50: by pure object maybe Simon means knowledge does not act on its object, modify it, nor make it (nor desire it?, nor act on ourselves on the occasion of the object?)

Page 52: comment. Knowing is a being or a becoming specified by the other. The other does not specify this way of being by forming a union with the knower but by remaining other than the knower. The other specifies this way of being as other. To know is to be the other as other. See Aquinas de Veritate, question two, article two; the summa part one, question 14, article one.

Page 55: the later "thing/object" distinction appears. When it attains its objects, it attains things independent of it. This is the positive formulation of the question that ends the first paragraph of the thing/object section in "degrees of knowledge": what should we think of this idea of "thing", that is, when we attain objects, do we attain things? (Tie in with the last part of Simon's thing/object discussion, where he says that knowledge of truth does not come from knowledge of objects as objects, for in that way they are not identical, but from the identity of each separate object with what is more than an object, a thing.)

Page 58: interesting note on the beatific vision.

Page 66 mentions Suarez along with Vasquez as decadent scholastics.

Pages 68 and 69: important discussion of truth. Distinguishes identity (simple apprehension) from conformity (judgment).

Check Reflexions and Formal Logic for more statements like DK's "every object is set before the mind as something capable of existing." (And note: this is a logical point because it concerns the way objects are "set before the mind" or are "presented" to the mind.)

Xxx, self-consciousness, 3-8-91

Maritain: Be sure to point out that Maritain has implicit, concomitant self-

awareness, self-awareness not requiring a distinct act. See your comments on such a text (in a footnote?) in the DK section preceding "Common Sense" section. This may appear to contradict Aquinas, who seems to require a distinct act for the soul to be aware of itself. However, there is at least one text in Aquinas which seems to affirm a concomitant self-awareness without a secondary act. That text is the one Simon quotes at the beginning of his section on truth to show that the knower always has some self-knowledge but not necessarily the kind of self knowledge involved in the grasp of truth.

But if Aquinas does affirm the need for a second act, he is wrong, as the problem raised in that appendix to DK (how do I know that the object of the second act is the same being performing the second act) shows.

Course idea, Jul. 16, 96

Have a course showing what is unique to Thomism in the solution to philosophical problems. I.e., a course showing the alternatives that Thomism offers but no one else offers. Use Adler's list (see Deal) and Maritain's Introduction to Philosophy. Also use the similarities between The Degrees of Knowledge and current philosophies of science to show the superiority of Maritain's approach, e.g., he can say with Quine that scientific truth applies to theories as a whole, because he has another absolute standard of truth. And he can distinguish the aspects of quantum mechanics that do and do not have ontological weight.

Sheep show by their behavior that they relate to sensed objects as more than objects. A sheep does not flee from a wolf simply as an unpleasant object of sight, an ugly object or one that it hurts the sheep to look at. If so, the sheep would not

have to flee from the wolf. To avoid the wolf as an object of sight, the sheep would merely have to look in a different direction. It is the existence of the wolf, not distinguishable from other characteristics by the senses but presented to the senses by means such sensory characteristics, that causes the sheep to flee.

xxx Van Riet on Maritain, May 5, 91

Van Riet misses at least two essential things.

First, Maritain argues to realism from what it means to call something an object, from the conditions necessary for knowing that something is an object, from what we are doing when we call something an object.

Second, Van Riet brings in the question of truth later in the discussion. Maritain brings in thing and object precisely to solve the problem that results from the definition of truth. If truth is conformity of thought to what is beyond thought, how can we know truth? Well, thought is of something, an object of thought, so the question is what is the relation of the object of thought to what is beyond (independent) of thought, and how do we know that relation. That is, question is not directly what is the relation of thought to what is beyond thought but what is the relation of the object of thought to what is beyond thought. For the reason we postulate the existence of thoughts is that we are aware of our consciousness of objects of consciousness and postulate thoughts as vehicles for that consciousness. So if we can answer the question of the relation of objects to things, the question of the relation of thought to things takes care of itself.

xxx thing/object vocabulary, October 10, 79

We need a word for any object, real being or cognition constituted object, insofar as it is something more than what-is-objectified-in-some-way. For a cognition constituted object can be objectified in more than one way even though it does not really exist. The best word for that is a Latin "quod". In other words, the what; the what-it-is that is made an object. The quod that is made an object.

xxx critical realism, November 26, 89

Maritain is primarily defending reason not sense perception.

August 12, 90

see the translator of Gilson who replies to Pat Lee in the ACPQ.

Pages 222 and 223 of McCool's "From Unity to Pluralism: "for Maritain the abiding validity of logical truth rests on the concept rather than on the judgment." Assuming that this means something, and I don't know what it mean, it is wrong. Truth rests not on concepts but on the transobjective and transconceptual identity of things objectified via diverse concepts.

And what can it mean for "concepts to change" (passim) if not that words acquire new meaning, or a concept has ceased to be used, not that the concept itself is no longer what it is.

The reason Maritain spent so much time on the philosophy of nature is not that it was so important for metaphysics but that there was a need to relate what philosophy said about the natural world to what modern science said. That need would exist whether what philosophy said about the natural world belongs to the philosophy of

nature or, as for Gilson, to metaphysics.

xxx "degrees of knowledge" texts, December 23, 90

On page 89 and 98, the end of note to, he talks about resolution to sense or to first principles.

On page 91 he says that the tragedy of modern noetic began when the scholastics of the decadent. Separated object from thing. What is he referring to? See the Roland Dalbiez articles cited on page 123, note one. And see the reference to Vasquez and to the "reflections" comment on him on page 128, note two. See also the reference to Scotus on page 103 note one.

Page 95, sensation: in "reflections" he says "the phenomenon is able to be thought only posteriorly to being." By the "phenomenon" he is referring to a way of describing objects as objects, in this case objects of sensation. Given that an object must be more-than-and-object, is this "more" being? Yes, but if and only if the sensory object is, or can be recognized by the intellect to be, being. And the sensory object can be so recognized because (first paragraph) that object is not just redness, etc.. But *something* red, warm, moving, etc. and (still first paragraph) *something existing* that is red, etc..

Second paragraph: the existence that sensory objects are presented as exercising is the primary model for our concept of existence. Therefore, we wouldn't have the concept of existence that derives from self reflection unless we first had the concept of existence that derives from sensation. Reflection needs something to reflect on, and we would not have anything to reflect on that our awareness not began with sensory awareness.

Also, the sheep does not flee the wolf because the wolf is an ugly sight or

something that hurts the eye. The sheep flees from him as something existing, something real, to be avoided. If the wolf was just an ugly sight or something that hurt the eye, we could avoid the discomfort simply by looking someplace else, we wouldn't have to run away. The sheep would not have to run away.

Page 1??: Phenomenology "gives the lie to what it says by what it does." It contradicts what it says by what it does.

Page 105, second paragraph: "it is still frankly a reconstruction, and, like every reconstruction, it presupposes some original. Note the Wittgensteinian ring of this argument. And like Wittgenstein, he does not generalize and hypothesize the argument into a "paradigm case" argument. He just knows that this is a reconstruction and therefore has an original.

Third paragraph: "but that would be to betray the method of phenomenology." (Of course, he is talking about phenomenology in its then Husserlian idealistic form.) Why? Maybe he is just saying that it is a fact that the reason for this belief is that this belief is the original from which the reconstruction comes. So the betrayal would be to admit the original, rather than leave it as a residue. Or maybe he is saying that, for some reason, the method of phenomenology cannot assign a reason, that is, that if phenomenology were true, we should not have this belief, or at least, there should be no reason for this belief.

From the rest of the paragraph, he is arguing that all phenomenology can do on its own ground is provide a substitute for this belief and so not admit that the belief needs an explanation.

Last paragraph: "but by suppressing extramental being, he suppresses the epoche as well", suppresses the bracket. Again, an argument with a Wittgensteinian ring. The meaning of the bracket depends on its opposition to and contrast to that which is being bracketed. Likewise, to say everything is subjective is to suppress

what we start off meaning by "subjective," since in its original context, everyday speech, "subjective" gets its use from its contrast with "objective" (see similar examples in "the blue book"). But like Wittgenstein, Maritain does not generalize this into a universal type, the "excluded opposite argument". He just notes that in this case, one of the set of terms, "bracketing," gets its meaning from its contrast with the other member of the set.

Page 109, note two: note the reference at the end to knowledge by means of connaturality, instead of by means of concepts. Connaturality does not use concepts because it involves the subject's nonobjective awareness of itself (and pre-reflective and hence pre-conceptual knowledge of self; we only construct reflexive concepts in explicit reflection on ourselves), as in Marcel's, as opposed to Maritain's, sense of "ontological mystery."

xxx expressed species and definitions, December 23, 90

Evans and Sikora thought that we know the definiendum, for example man, by an impressed species and know the definition, for example, rational animal, by expressed species. Maritain's own examples of concepts in "degrees of knowledge" contradict that. On page 123, he gives "man" as an example of an object of thought "placed before the mind" by an abstract and universal "concept," and by "concept" in this section he means expressed as opposed to impressed species.

Again, on page 130, he says concepts actualize the potential intelligibility in things. And that the content known by concepts is abstracted from sensed individuals. But in the discussion of abstraction on pages 136 and 137 his examples are getting "man"

from "Peter" and "animal" from ", "man" that is, not getting "rational animal" or "sensory living thing," respectively.

xxx abstraction, universality, properties of objects as objects, December 20 4, 90
Page 130, last paragraph: "if thing and object are distinguished in this fashion." What fashion? He has just explained abstraction from singulars in the context of concepts. So objects are abstract; extraction is a property of objects as objects. Further "if allowance is made for what comes from the thing and what comes from the mind in knowing." So properties of the object come from the mind in knowing, because he is still explaining the phrase "if thing an object are distinguished in this fashion."

"The mind draws forth a world of objects composed of abstract and universal concepts." He must mean objective concepts, or at least the psychological concept in its function of being intentionally identical with the thing. But the important thing is that both universality and abstraction are properties of objects as objects.

xxx to be is not to be known, February 1, 91

When the object of thought is existence, it is something other than the existence of this act of knowing existence. This act of knowing existence has its own existence, but the term of this act is something other than the act's own existence; that act is not just knowledge of its own existence. The existence we are thinking about is on a par with the existence of the act of thinking. That is, when we say the act of thinking exists what we are attributing to it is the same kind of value we are thinking about when we are thinking about existence.

Since what we think about is other than this act of thinking and since we know the thinking exists, the existence we are thinking about in the direct act of thinking is not identical with the existence we are reflexively aware of. The existence we are

thinking about is the existence of something, some unspecified thing, for that is what existence is, the existence of something.

And the thing of which it is the existence is not, in the first instance, the act of knowledge. For every object, chair, Florida, the number two, etc. logically includes existence. So the primary existence we think of is the existence of our primary objects, which are other than our acts of knowing them; so their existence is other than the existence of the act whereby we know them, really other. The existence of a car is other than the existence of the act of seeing the car.

"What it is" that exists in each case differs, and existence applies to my act of knowledge the way it applies to the car, that is, it is something that exists. If the existence of the car were only conceptually distinct from my knowledge of the car, existence would not apply to both equally. My knowledge would exist, and *that which* then exists, as distinct from its existence, would be the existence of the car. Or, the other possibility, one and the same existence would be the existence of the car and the act of knowledge. But then "what it is that exists" would not really differ in each case.

The fact that an object is other than the knowledge of it does not mean that the object's existence is other than an existence in knowledge, for example, red, beings of reason, etc. (but even for beings of reason the existence we attribute to them is not to-be-known). But when we ask whether existence is to be known, the object, existence, is other than the act by which we objectify it. How other? Other as what exists is other than its existence (here intentional existence) and as a cause (here a formal cause) is other than its effect.

And the existence we ask about is relative to, is of, objects like apples, wars, etc., which objects are also other than the act by which we know them; we ask is the existence of an Apple other than to be known, etc. So we are asking about something which, as objectified, is indifferent to being known and which, if and when it occurs,

is just as indifferent to being known as is my act of knowledge. (My act of knowledge does not depend for its existence on the reflexive, secondary, act by which I grasp it.)

Perhaps when we are aware of red, our awareness is other than red but not other than the existence of red, than what it is for red to exist. But what about when and the object of our awareness is existence itself ? Can a relation, for example, consciousness-of, be only logically distinct from the term of the relation? "Logically" means "in consciousness," but the existence of consciousness is what we are trying to analyze, that is, for consciousness to exist something must be in consciousness. And this something must be other than the consciousness of it in more ways than just "in consciousness" (that is, more ways than just logically); for unless there were an other for consciousness to be of, nothing could be "in consciousness" that is, for a logical distinction to exist, it must be based on something, derived from something.

A distinction between the consciousness of A and A is: the existence of A, if and when it occurs, is other than the existence of the consciousness (not other than the consciousness but other than the existence of the consciousness). What exists when the consciousness exists is other than what exists when A exists.

March 9, 91

Since there is a causal relation between a knowledge relation and it's a specifying object, the knowledge relation cannot be identical with a specifying object. And since the object, in its role as a specifying cause, includes a relation to an existence other than this current knowledge relation, the existence that the object is capable of is other than this knowledge relation, because that existence is part of the specifying cause of the knowledge relation.

So the distinction between the existence that is an object (even possible existence) and its being known (the relation of knowledge) is not just conceptual. Nor

is it, this existence, equivalent to being known by some transcendental ego as opposed to by our egos. The only real existence that specifies God's knowledge is God's own existence. If anything else really exists, its to be is not a specifying object of God's knowledge. See the footnote on idealism in chapter five of "degrees of knowledge."

Even beings of reason, cognition constituted objects, are related to a fictitious existence other than the act by which beings of reason or their "existence" is known. Poinset, in the section on the nature in kinds of beings of reason, says that what makes an object of being of reason is not its dependence on knowledge for being an object, but its dependence on knowledge for being formed and constructed, for acquiring the form and construction that is then capable of being an object.

But the primary meaning of "being" and sensed existence cannot be beings of reason for Maritain. Both are presupposed to beings of reason. The opponent says (1) the concept of being depends on our linguistic structures and (2) we could be in an hallucination tank. To (1) Maritain responds with the thing object distinction: diverse linguistic structures give objects different characteristics as objects not as things. That answer is presupposed to the response to (2): we use of necessary ontological truths, truths using the concept of real, extraobjective existence, to know that the tank hypothesis is not just unreasonable to believe but totally unreasonable to believe, *necessarily* unreasonable to believe.

xxx to be is not to be known, February 2, 79

To be can amount to being known only in two cases. First, there is God's knowledge of himself. Second, in the case of creatures, the relation of being caused by God is identical with being known by God in a certain kind of knowledge, since in God knowledge is identical with the act of existence by which he is the cause of creatures.

But in the second case, being-known is a causal relation possessed by something that must be really distinct from God's knowledge. Since it is really distinct from God's knowledge the possessor of the relation must really exist and have a real existence distinct from God's. ("Possessing" the relation here refers to existence's being a material relation of dependence on God; the existence is identical with a causal relation to God and hence to God's knowledge.)

xxx cognition constituted objects, June 15, 2005

What *causes* the truth of predications about cognition constituted objects? In the case of necessary truth, the cause is logical relations or cognition constituted causal relations between them as so defined.

What about contingent truths? In a case like "this is the cognition constituted object I thought of last night" the cause is the real existence of a certain act of knowledge.

"The Philosophy of Nature" page 59: refers to "the modern spiritualist tradition ... which seeks an introspection the means of transcending the mechanism of the natural sciences." Perhaps he is thinking all the way back to Descartes. But the description certainly applies to those who seek in phenomenology and existentialism an escape from the perceived value-barreness of empirical science.

Maritain - t/o - AA 8-6-91

There is a view that anything expressed in language (concepts) reflects an interpretation imposed on what we are trying to express by the background features of the language. It is possible for a language to illegitimately impose an

interpretation on things. But that is something that must be shown in particular cases. For language is a means of making things terms of cognitional relations. As such, different languages necessarily impose on objects diverse features pertaining to them as objects. For example, one language might use verbs of action where another uses adjectives and the copula exclusively. But characteristics pertaining to objects as objects are not, or need not be, what we attribute to things when we use language to communicate about things. And if our statements do attribute to things as things characteristics with which they are associated only as a result of being objects, those statements are false.

It may be claimed that we cannot distinguish between what features we attribute to things as things, when we use language, and what features accrue to them as our objects as a result of our using language. But if the evidence for the truth of statements from different languages is the same, there is no reason to assume those statements differ in what they attribute to things as things. The opponent will reply that her intent is to impeach the very notion of evidence as something capable of adjudicating between conflicting opinions.

But to establish that statements are genuinely in conflict, one must do more than point to differences between them that derive from language. In fact, statements cannot be in conflict unless their words mean the same thing. And sameness of meaning seems ruled out if words from different languages attribute to things features unique to each language. The only way to show a genuine conflict between statements is to show that the evidence for the truth of one rules out the truth of the other.

The opponent will reply that it is the realist who is in the vicious circle. To count as evidence for or against a statement, experience must be expressed in language; as soon as it is expressed in language, it is no longer raw experience but experience interpreted through concepts. Maritain could reply that we can adjudicate between

(genuinely) conflicting interpretations of experience on the basis of necessary truths that constitute nonKantian regulatory principles for our empirical beliefs. For example, we know as a necessary truth that when a change occurs we can look for a cause. And we can identify the cause through investigation because we know as a necessary truth that similar causes have similar effects.

Such regulatory principles are nonKantian because they are ontological in the sense that they express, not conditions for the possibility of experience, but conditions for the possibility of existence, that is, conditions of possibility, period. As employing the concept of existence, they are, when necessarily true, true of whatever satisfies the object of the concept of existence, so there is no danger of their falsely interpreting reality. Where the evidence of neither necessary truths nor experience can distinguish between two statements, the differences between the statements belong to the category of what belongs to objects as objects, not to what is asserted about objects as things.

So ontological necessary truths enable us to use the thing/object distinction in response to the relativist. There is room for all sorts of relativity pertaining to objects as objects without implying any relativity in what we believe true about things as things. It does not matter whether all languages can express ontological truths, that is, whether they can express existence as an object of concept. It only matters that at least one language can. Einstein was able to introduce relativity into scientific theory by situating the elements of relativity properly with respect to something absolute, the combined spatial-temporal interval between events. But Einstein only succeeded in that project by using a specific language, the language of tensorial calculus.

Similarly, Maritain needs a specific language, ontological language to be able to situate the elements of relativity in language on the side of objects as objects while preserving the absoluteness of what is true of things as things. But as a result,

where Kant gave us an idealistic Copernican revolution, Maritain makes possible a realist Einsteinian revolution doing justice to the relative without forsaking the absolute.

The common sense notion of truth naturally gives rise to epistemological problems because, in common sense, a correct notion of truth is associated with extraneous elements that would render

Before turning to Maritain's next arguments, it will be helpful to consider two arguments closely related to his, but not explicitly made by him.

that statement is true, some "thing," something that is more than an object, is twice made an object, once by means of the noun "lion" and once by means of the adjective "carnivorous." And if

Maritain

In his essay, "Critical Realism," Jacques Maritain told us that "The problem of thing and object is the nub of the critical problem."⁷ Since that time, the thing/object distinction has been almost totally ignored. Either Maritain was very mistaken, or we have been missing something very important. In fact, if Maritain was correct, "Critical Realism" must be the most important epistemological work of this century. For it alone can claim to have addressed "the nub of the critical problem," since it alone approaches epistemological questions from the perspective of "the problem of thing and object."

One reason we have failed to grasp the significance of the thing/object distinction may be this. Maritain tells us "We would say in Thomistic language that the thing is the 'material object' of the sense and intellect, whereas what we are calling object in this context . . . is their 'formal object'." (93) When we read that, there is a temptation to think we know what we need to know about the thing/object distinction, because we understand the scholastic distinction between formal and material objects. And if that is all there is to the thing/object distinction, we have

good reason to think that Maritain exaggerated its significance for epistemological problems. In fact, it is hard to see how Maritain can use that distinction against the skeptics and idealists he addresses in "Critical Realism" without begging their questions.

For the scholastics, it is true that "material object and formal object are grasped at a single stroke and indivisibly by the very same perceptions" (93), because formal objects "are aspects (it would be better to say 'inspects') of elements of knowability in certain ontological nuclei called things." (92) But for the modern epistemologist, these claims about the relation of our objects to things are precisely what stand in need of justification. The modern epistemologist will grant that our awareness relates us to objects, but she wonders about the relation of our objects to extramental things. If she is a skeptic, she may not doubt the possibility of their being extramental things, but she will doubt whether our consciousness gives us accurate information about things. If she is an idealist, she may not doubt that our consciousness gives us accurate information about things, but she will doubt whether these things have an existence that is other than being known.

Maritain, of course, did not seek a "justification" of knowledge in the sense of a direct proof that our awareness reaches things in their extramental existence. He sought no more than to be able to reduce the opposite position to absurdity. He can prove realism without making our awareness of things indirect, because it is the proof that is indirect. But he claimed that the thing/object distinction allowed him to reduce the skeptic or idealist to absurdity. And it is difficult to see how the scholastic distinction between formal and material objects can serve to do that.

But while Maritain's analysis of thing and object is consistent with the scholastic use of the material object/formal object distinction, his analysis goes further, or rather, deeper. He asks us to consider what we are doing when we call something an "object" of consciousness; what conditions are necessary for calling

something an "object." The subject-object polarity is a fundamental fact of consciousness, encountered in our reflective self-awareness. We can ask epistemological questions only because we are aware of our own consciousness. And this reality we call "consciousness" is a relational reality, a way of relating to terms non-identical with itself that we call its "objects." Maritain saw that the conditions necessary for recognizing the situation we call consciousness's relation to objects provide a reduction to absurdity of the positions of the skeptic and the idealist.

But that reduction to absurdity is only the first step. The ground-floor analysis of what it means to call something an object provides us with a tool, the thing/object distinction, applicable to the whole range of questions about human knowledge, from the distinction and nature of the sciences, as the Scholastics had seen, to contemporary problems of the relativity of truth in hermeneutics, the history of science, and cultural and psychological linguistics. As Kant gave us a Copernican revolution, Maritain makes possible an Einsteinian revolution where, as in Einstein, we account for the relative by situating it properly with respect to something absolute. In Einstein, measurements of space and measurements of time are relativized by recognizing the absoluteness of the measurement of the spatial-temporal interval. In Maritain, relativity can characterize objects as objects without interfering with the absoluteness of our knowledge of things as things.

1.

How, then, do the conditions required for using the concept of object enable us to defend realism? An "object" is an object of knowledge. "We must distinguish," Maritain tells us, "between the thing as thing -- as existing or able to exist for itself -- and the thing as object -- when it is set before the faculty of knowing and made present to it." (91) "The object is the correlative of a knowing subject . . . which precisely takes the name 'object' from the fact that it is presented to the mind." (93) When we describe something as an object, we are describing it as the term of a

knowledge relation. We are saying that it is known, conceived, seen, heard, referred to, described, mentioned, thought about, remembered, etc. Any state of awareness has an object, since an awareness is an awareness of something.⁸ And just as we can describe awareness as a relation to something, we can describe that something as a term of a relation of awareness, as an object.

But we cannot describe that something only as a term of a relation of awareness. Whatever we are aware of, we must be aware of more than its being an object. If the only thing we were aware of were that something was an object, the only thing we would be aware of was that something was a term of a relation of awareness. In order for something to be recognized as a term of a relation of awareness, we must recognize the awareness of which it is the term. In order to describe something as what is "seen," we must be aware of what sight is; in order to describe something as what is "imagined," we must be aware of what imagination is. We know states of awareness, like seeing and imagining, through reflective self-awareness, secondary states of awareness that relate us to prior states of awareness.⁹ Like any awareness, reflective self-awareness is a relation to a term which, ipso facto, is distinct from the awareness as the term of any relation is distinct from the relation. The distinct term of reflective self-awareness is a prior, primary awareness. But what is the term of that prior awareness? What is it aware of? What is the something of which it is an awareness?

If it is aware only that something is an object of awareness, it is aware of an awareness, just as reflective self-awareness is. And there must be an additional awareness for it to be aware of. But what is that additional awareness aware of? That something is an object of awareness? An infinite regress is underway. If the only thing we know about something is that it is an object of consciousness, consciousness must start be being consciousness of consciousness. Consciousness could never come into existence on that condition, because a requirement for its

coming into existence would be a series of prior consciousnesses that, being infinite, would never terminate at the consciousness whose existence we are considering. But that consciousness does exist; epistemological only questions arise because we recognize the existence of conscious states. Therefore objects of consciousness are always known as more than objects of consciousness. What is seen is not that something is seen but that something is red or round or moving. What is imagined, in the first instance, is not that something is imagined but that it is tall or swift or soft. Later, we can imagine(2) that something is imagined(1). But what is imagined(1) cannot be the something is imagined; otherwise, there would be nothing for imagining(2) to imagine.

This argument derives from Maritain, but he puts in an a compressed and oblique manner, which may be another reason we have failed to grasp the significance of his analysis. We can see that it derives from Maritain by looking at the paragraphs where he justifies his assertion that the problem of thing and object is the nub of the critical problem. Immediately after making that statement, he criticizes those who consider it "'naive realism' . . . to start with an act of knowledge about things rather than an act of knowledge about knowledge." (107) So those who deny that objects of knowledge are also things are starting with an act of knowledge about knowledge. The knowledge that something is an object is knowledge about knowledge, since something "precisely takes the name 'object' from the fact that it is presented to the mind" (93), that is, "is set before the faculty of knowing" (91). And to start with knowledge about knowledge is to "fain start with what comes second." (108)

To claim that we are aware of objects without being aware that they are things is to start with and what we know to come second in awareness, because we know that awareness is awareness of something other than awareness. For, as Maritain continues, "One cannot think about a 'thought thing' until after one has

thought about a 'thinkable thing.'" To call something an object is to think about a "thought thing"; for to call it an object is to describe it as term of a relation of awareness. But for awareness to have a term, that term must be other than awareness itself. The term must not be a "thought thing" but a "thinkable thing," that is, something whose nature makes it potentially the term of a knowledge relation, but whose nature is more than the term of a knowledge relation. For unless it were something more than the term of a knowledge relation, more than an object, it could not be the term of a knowledge relation even potentially, because then the first term of a knowledge relation would be knowledge.

Again, "The cogitatum (the object) of the first cogito is not cogitatum (the fact that something is an object) but ens." The cogitatum of the first cogito must be something more than cogitatum or else the first cogito could have nothing for its cogitatum. For "We do not eat what has been eaten; we eat bread." (108) Like cogitating, eating is a relation to a term; we eat something. And for the relation of cogitating to have as its first term the fact that something is cogitated would be like eating, not bread with its quality of having carbohydrates or meat with its quality of having protein, but something with one quality only, the quality of being "that which is eaten." And if that were its only quality, there would be nothing eaten, even potentially. To be "that which is eaten" the term of the relation of eating must have other characteristics. Likewise, if the cogitated were nothing more than "that which is cogitated," there would be nothing cogitated, even potentially. To be that which is cogitated, the cogitated must be more than that which is cogitated. It must be cogitated as green or organic or at rest or oblong or possessing mass, etc. Objects of awareness must be more than "objects of awareness."

And we are capable of knowing they are more than mere objects as soon as we form the notion of object. The original data presupposed to the asking of epistemological questions is the bipolarity of consciousness, the relation of

consciousness to something other than itself. Modern philosophy spontaneously calls that other the object. Many a student encountering philosophy for the first time has reached the point of describing consciousness as a subject-object polarity, only to wonder how to establish the relation of objects to what is independent of consciousness. Maritain shows that what we spontaneously call an object we must be aware of all along as something other than an object. He shows that what is known at the outset is necessarily something later recognizable as being more than the "known."

And as he notes "In current modern language, it (the word 'object') has received a very different meaning inasmuch as the opposition of objective to subjective has finally made the values proper to "thing" or the "real" pass on to the object." (91, n. 1) To express realism, we say there are "objective truths" and "objective facts"; we speak of what comes from the side of the "object" of knowledge rather than the subject; we accuse skeptics and idealists of denying the "objective" character of knowledge. In other words, we find it natural, when describing things as what I have called "more than objects," to call them "objects." Why? When we are reflecting on the subject of knowledge, which is what we are doing in epistemology, it is proper to distinguish the known from the subject of knowledge by calling the known an "object." In Latin, "objicio" means what is "to throw in the way of, against, or before something." When we describe the known as an object, we are describing it as thrown against the knower and, therefore, as distinguished from the knower. We recognize the distinction of object from subject in the act by which we recognize, and for the same reason that we recognize, the subject as related to the object. And in reflecting on the bipolarity of consciousness, we instinctively recognize that in being aware of the object-pole, as distinct from being aware of the subject-pole, we are aware of more than the subject's relation to the object or the object's relation to it. In recognizing the distinction between the subject-pole and the object-pole, we

implicitly recognize the independence from the subject of that which we have distinguished from the subject by calling it an "object." Therefore, we use "object" and "objective" to express that independence.

What Maritain does is show that the data we are aware of when we use "object" in this way, namely, necessarily justifies our calling them things as well as objects, since to be aware of them as objects we must be aware of them as more than objects. The object-pole of the bipolarity of consciousness is known from the very beginning, before reflection, as what we can later call, after reflection, more than an object. All along, the data we need to affirm realism is there, is directly there, and is demonstrably (by indirect proof) directly there. When we describe one pole of consciousness as an "object," we are already expressing secondary knowledge of it; so we must have a primary knowledge of it other than as an object. If not, there would be no secondary knowledge. That which we are aware of must be more than "that which we are aware of."

The argument as so far presented is far from being the whole of Maritain's defense of realism, but it is the necessary presupposition of the rest of his argument. That more is needed is obvious from the fact that the thing/object analysis so far given applies as much to the objects of imagination or conception, which need not really exist outside of awareness, as to the objects of sense perception, which (presumably) do have extramental existence. And has the argument even proven that, if something really exists, as opposed to being merely imagined or conceived, that existence is something other than being an object of knowledge? Granted, what is known, at any level of consciousness, is known as more than "known." Does it follow that this something more has an existence independent of consciousness. For example, what is seen is not seen as "seen," it is seen as red or some other color. But it does not follow that color has an

existence in things independent of our perception.

Maritain's answer is that existence is the primary value included in our objects as more than objects; existence is included in what is known insofar as what is known is more than "what is known." Therefore, even though not all our objects really exist or are known to really exist, if and when they really exist, that existence is other than being known. Furthermore, sense experience lets us know that its objects really exist, even if perceived qualities like colors do not exist in things as they are perceived. We do have objects that are not capable of extramental existence. These are beings of reason. But we can have beings of reason as objects only by thinking them on the pattern of real being, and so only in dependence of our awareness of real being.

Maritain offers a variety of arguments in support of these conclusions. To appreciate the force of these arguments, we have to understand them in relation to Maritain's analysis of truth, because that analysis of truth is his reason for introducing the thing/object distinction to begin with.

A thing cannot be really related to itself, or a relation to itself. Consciousness is a relation to the object, so consciousness must be other than the object. A thing can be logically related to itself, but consciousness is not just a logical relation, a being of reason; consciousness really exists.

1. Give a reference and perhaps use the footnote to make some remarks that would otherwise have to go in, and lengthen, the text.
2. Cite Introduction to Philosophy, epistemology deals with final causes. Maybe use this footnote to explain why philosophy is critical.
3. My emphasis.
4. Quote Gilson that he does not disagree with Maritain's views on common sense. But add that Maritain attributes his views to Aquinas, i.e., Maritain claims that the views he very precisely defines concerning "common sense" can be found scattered in Aquinas.
5. Notice the "resemblance" between the resemblance theory Maritain rejects and Wittgenstein's picture theory of truth. Of course, there is much more to the picture theory, but the problems the picture theory inevitably got into are basically the same as the problems that Maritain's solution to the problems of correspondence overcome.
6. Maritain defines the logical as the order of the "known as known," i.e., of what belongs to objects as objects.
7. Reference.
8. Maritain recognizes the existence of modes of consciousness not describable by the subject-object polarity. But these modes exist secondarily and in dependence on the prior awareness of objects on the part of the subject, especially in sensation.
9. Both Maritain and Aquinas affirm the existence of an implicit self-awareness in any direct awareness of the other. And Causal Realism shows how the thing/object distinction can be made independent of the "act-object" analysis of consciousness.