

CHAPTER 8  
Fourteenth-Century Debates  
about the Nature of the *Categories*

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Introduction. Demonstration vs. Derivation of the Categories and the Nature of the Categorical Table

Two general and, in a way, preliminary problems concerning Aristotle's *Categories* are the extension and the nature of the categorical table. In many respects, these problems can be tackled separately. The demonstration of the sufficiency (exhaustivity without overlap) of the categorical table is independent of the answer interpreters are disposed to give to the question concerning the nature of the items falling under the categories. Such a demonstration is likely to sound more persuasive if the interpreter takes an ontological interpretation of the *Categories*: if he understands the categories as a classification of things. For if he embraces a linguistic interpretation and assumes that the categories are a classification of the signifying terms in language, he will encounter more difficulties in proving the sufficiency of the table. An opponent might argue that, since terms are imposed in a conventional way to signify things, the categorical table too has been imposed conventionally, and from this conclude that the categories can be multiplied arbitrarily.<sup>1</sup> A similar situation can occur, however, even if interpreters subscribe to the ontological

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1. See, for example, Walter Burley, *Super Predicamenta*, f. c 3 vb: "Et si dicatur quod sensus divisionis est iste, quod singulum incomplexorum aut est vox significativa substantiam, aut qualitatem et sic de residuis, contra: secundum illud hec divisio non fieret in decem membra, quia multo plures possunt esse voces incomplexae, et forsan infinite sunt, quarum quelibet significat aliquid decem predicamentorum, tam in diversis idiomatibus quam in eodem idiomate. Ergo si hec divisio foret in voces incomplexas, significantes decem predicamenta, hec divisio fieret in plura membra quam in

interpretation, since someone could argue that, at least in principle, it is possible to discover other kinds of things or modes of being of things than those which fall under the ten categories.<sup>2</sup> Regardless, therefore, of which answer an interpreter favours to the question about the nature of the categorial items, he may need independent arguments to prove the sufficiency of the categorial table. In practice, though, the two sides seem to agree that it is impossible to demonstrate sufficiency, because there seems to be no way to exclude the two counterfactual situations mentioned above. Since no argument can be given to exclude the possibility that some new (ontological or linguistic) category may be introduced or discovered, it follows that no argument can be given to establish that the categories are ten and only ten. This does not, however, entail that the division into ten, and just ten, categories, as proposed by Aristotle, cannot be justified.

One might think that accepting the impossibility of proving the sufficiency of the categories was restricted to such commentators as wanted to maintain both the full extension of the categorial table and its ontological value. This is a false impression, however, for the interpreters advocating the ontological interpretation but admitting a shorter list of the categories (a solution widely adopted in the first half of fourteenth century) also accept that impossibility. In the first half of the fourteenth century, in particular, it becomes a standard position that it is difficult, if not impossible, to demonstrate the sufficiency of the categorial table, while it is perfectly possible to explain the derivation of the ten categories. John Buridan, for example, explicitly asserts the impracticability of any demonstration. Buridan gives only one argument for this point: according to Aristotle's doctrine, the ten categories cannot be derived from a common concept that is univocally predicated of them, for they express the fundamental and most universal kinds of concepts that we can have of things. If we cannot point to a concept above the categories, it follows that we cannot indicate any rule of derivation of the cate-

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decem, immo quasi in membra infinita; quod est absurdum.”; also see John Buridan, *Quaestiones Praed.* 3, p. 17-18.92-96.

2. See, for example, John Buridan, *Quaestiones Praed.* 3, p. 19.131 sq.

gories; therefore, we cannot explain the exhaustiveness of our categorial concepts. Buridan thus concludes that we are unable to elaborate any *a priori* and deductive demonstration of the sufficiency of the categories, since we lack any premise containing concepts that are more general than those of the categories. Yet for Buridan, the impossibility of tracing back each category to a common concept is what nonetheless allows us to derive their number. Such a derivation however – Buridan observes – cannot be but empirical and *a posteriori*, obtained by means of some sort of pragmatic or inductive procedure; as a result, it turns out to be intrinsically provisional.<sup>3</sup>

Buridan's distinction between demonstrating and deriving the categories is not new. In his late *Commentary on the Categories* (1337 ca.), Walter Burley formulated a position that is in many respects similar to that of Buridan. Burley also distinguishes the question of the sufficiency from that of the derivation of the categories. First, Burley recalls that there is a 'modern trend', paradigmatically exemplified by William of Ockham, that narrows down the extra-mental relevance of the categorial table to two categories (i.e. Substance and Quality).<sup>4</sup> Supporters of such a position nonetheless propose a derivation of the entire table. Ockham, for example, thinks that the ten categories can be elicited from the rhetorical practice of asking questions about a thing. Second and more explicitly, Burley records the existence of two possible ways of deriving the ten categories – the *predicative* one put forward by Thomas Aquinas,<sup>5</sup> and the *ontological* one proposed by John Duns Scotus.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, he affirms the impossibility of demonstrating their exact number.<sup>7</sup>

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3. Cf. John Buridan, *Quaestiones Praed.* 3, p. 19.131-146. See also *Summulae in Praedicamenta* 3.1.8, pp. 18-19.8-24.

4. Cf. Walter Burley, *Super Predicamenta*, f. c 3 vb-c 4 ra.

5. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Exp. Met.* 5.8.890-892. On Aquinas's deduction of the categorial table, see Wippel 1987.

6. Cf. e.g. John Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones Metaph.* 5.5-6. On Scotus's theory of categories, see Pini 2002 and Pini 2005. In particular, on Scotus's derivation of the categories, see Pini 2003.

7. Cf. Walter Burley, *Super Predicamenta*, f. c 4 ra-b: "Intelligendum est quod, quamvis numerus predicamentorum non possit demonstrari, tamen aliqui acceperunt sufficientiam predicamentorum sic: dicunt quod predicamentum sumitur a modo predi-

These observations show that, although they finally elaborate different accounts of the nature of the categories, Burley and Buridan share the idea that demonstrating and deriving the sufficiency of the categories are different procedures. Moreover, both assume that the demonstration and derivation of the categories are problems that are distinct from that of determining the nature of the categorial table. In what follows, I shall not dwell further on the issue of the demonstration vs. derivation of the categories. Contemporary scholars have investigated this topic extensively. These brief comments about Burley and Buridan are intended to justify my initial assertion that fourteenth-century commentators regarded these problems as more or less unrelated to the problem of determining the nature of the categories and disjointed from it. In the following, I shall limit myself to discussing some arguments concerning the two interpretations of the nature of the categories singled out above.

### 1. Burley's Criticism of the Linguistic Interpretation of the *Categories*

Burley's *Commentary on the Categories* reveals that in the first decades of the fourteenth century the linguistic and the ontological interpretations were considered as the two competing accounts of the *Categories*. In particular, Burley is of the opinion that the ontological interpretation must be preferred to the linguistic one and that it was also the interpretation that Averroes and Avicenna elaborated.<sup>8</sup> Burley notes that the most common strategy for supporting

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candi et modus predicandi sumitur a modo essendi, et sic sunt duo modi principales essendi. (...) Aliter accipiunt alii sufficientiam predicamentorum sic: omne quod est, vel est per se existens vel alteri inherens (...).”

8. *Ibid.*, f. b 6 ra: “In hoc libro principaliter determinatur de vocibus secundum quod sunt significative rerum. Et ideo in hoc libro determinatur tam de rebus quam de vocibus, principaliter tamen de vocibus. Hec est intentio Boetii et Simplicii et multorum aliorum. Alia est opinio Avicenne et Averrois, quam credo esse veriorem, quod in hoc libro determinatur de rebus principaliter et ex consequenti et secundario de vocibus. Dicit enim Avicenna in prima parte sue *Logice* (...).”; f. c 2 ra: “Hec enim est sententia ipsius Averrois, qui in ponendo hanc primam divisionem dicit hic: Rerum

the linguistic interpretation – adopted, for example, by Boethius and Simplicius – consists in putting emphasis on some formulations in the *Categories* that can only be explained in a linguistic fashion: in ch. 1, for example, Aristotle explains the difference between homonymous, synonymous, and paronymous items in terms of the different ways of predicating a name and its definition of things; in ch. 2, 1a16 ff., and in ch. 4, Aristotle speaks of items that are *said* of something else with or without combination, and, as one could easily conclude, no extra-mental thing can be *said* of another thing if not by way of a linguistic intermediary; in ch. 5, 3b10 sq., Aristotle speaks of primary and secondary substances with respect to what they signify, but it is clear that only words can be properly said to signify.<sup>9</sup> Throughout the *Categories*, interpreters can find similar formulations to supporting the linguistic interpretation. Burley knows these passages, but nonetheless thinks that they may be easily reinterpreted to suit the ontological interpretation (in the way we shall illustrate in the following sections). Moreover, Burley raises a fundamental objection to the linguistic interpretation: if such an interpretation were right, all the categories would be reduced to that of Quality, since each linguistic term falls under the category of Quality.<sup>10</sup>

Burley's argument, appears not to be particularly compelling to the supporter of the linguistic interpretation. First of all, if the categories are said to classify signifying terms of language, such terms cannot be included in the category of Quality for the simple reason that the categories are not supposed to classify things but terms. Second, even granting that all linguistic terms belong to the category of Quality, such a conclusion would not carry any very drastic

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significatarum per dictiones, quedam sunt simplices significate per dictiones simplices (...).”

9. *Ibid.*, f. c 2 ra: “Res non dicuntur sed voces, ideo hec est divisio in voces. (...) Ex quibus videtur quod Philosophus in illa divisione loquitur de vocibus significantibus et non de rebus significatis.”

10. *Ibid.*, f. b 6 rb-va: “Si iste liber principaliter esset de vocibus, sequeretur quod decem predicamenta essent decem voces; sed omnis vox est in genere qualitatis; ergo decem predicamenta sunt in genere qualitatis, et sic non esset nisi unum genus generalissimum, scilicet qualitas.”

consequences, since it would show that terms belong to the category of Quality only when they are considered according to their *linguistic* or *syntactical* form, but this does not entail that every term, *semantically* considered, belongs to one and the same category.

Leaving aside the efficacy of Burley's argument, it is worth noting that, while arguing against a purely linguistic interpretation of the *Categories*, Burley does not exclude a semantic interpretation of them. Specifically, he seems to think that a certain 'ontological' version of a semantic interpretation can serve to reconcile the linguistic and the ontological interpretation to a certain degree. Let me clarify this point. According to the supporter of the linguistic interpretation, the *Categories* must be explained as a classification of terms; advocates of the ontological interpretation, instead, insist that they are a classification of things. The two proposals could be harmonized if one were disposed to read the *Categories* in a semantic manner. If one assumes indeed that the *Categories* classify things *qua* signified, that is, things in the way they are signified by linguistic terms, to state that the *Categories* classify things is not far from stating that they classify the linguistic counterparts of those things. What changes is that in one case, the emphasis is put on things, so that the supporter of the ontological interpretation can conclude that the *Categories* classify *primarily* things and *secondarily* terms, while in the other case, the emphasis is put on terms, so that the supporter of the linguistic interpretation can invert this order of priority and conclude that the *Categories* classify *primarily* terms and *secondarily* things. A semantic approach to the *Categories* seems to permit reconciling the ontological with the linguistic interpretation: the *Categories* classify things as signified by terms or – which amounts to the same thing – terms as signifying things. A semantic approach thus rules out two extreme interpretations of the *Categories*: *either* that the categories can be explained either as a classification of things *qua* externally existing, *or* as a classification of terms as such. On a semantic account of the *Categories*, opting for the linguistic or the ontological interpretation can be seen as a question of emphasis.

Burley takes the semantic interpretation of the *Categories* to be the right interpretation. Moreover, he seems to think that the different emphasis mentioned above can be reabsorbed in what we called an

‘ontological’ version of the semantic interpretation. It is along these lines that Burley understands Simplicius and Boethius’s claim that the *Categories* is a classification of signifying terms of language: the *Categories* are a classification of things although things are considered as expressed by words.<sup>11</sup> For Burley, there is no doubt that the *Categories* is a classification of things. Nonetheless he is aware that a merely ontological interpretation clashes with the scholastic practice prescribed in the curriculum of the Faculty of Arts, where the *Categories* was taught as the first of Aristotle’s *logical* writings. This is the reason why many philosophers opted for a linguistic interpretation. According to them, the *Categories* deals with the atomic parts of standard linguistic propositions, while *De interpretatione* focuses on the propositions themselves and the remaining books of the *Organon* on the different kinds of argument and syllogism.<sup>12</sup> It is in order to solve this problem, connected to the place of the *Categories* within the *cursus studiorum* of the Faculty of Arts, that Burley elaborates his distinctive doctrine of real propositions. If interpreters are willing to grant that some propositions predicate things of each other, argues Burley, nothing prevents them from reading the *Categories* as a treatise dealing with the basic and simple kinds of things that can make up a proposition. Nonetheless, Burley concedes that things are not presented in the *Categories* in the way they exist extra-mentally but as signified by words. Specifically, he argues that the *Categories* classifies each extra-mental thing that can be part of a real proposition as mirrored by a standard linguistic proposition. Thus, at some places Burley acknowledges that certain notions introduced by Aristotle – like the fundamental relationships of being in something else and

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11. *Ibid.*, f. c 3 vb: “Dico ergo quod Aristoteles in ista divisione dividit significata per voces incomplexas in decem res primas, scilicet in decem predicamenta. Et cum dicit Boetius quod Philosophus dividit ea que significant, dico quod verum est, sed non ex primaria intentione, sed ex secundaria intentione: ex primaria dividit rem significatam per vocem incomplexam in decem res, ita quod sensus divisionis est ille: quilibet res significata per vocem incomplexam aut est substantia aut quantitas et cetera.”

12. *Ibid.*, f. b 6 va: “Secundum dubium est quia videtur quod in libro *Predicamentorum* determinetur principaliter de partibus enunciationis, de quibus determinatur in libro *Peryermenias*; sed partes enunciationis non sunt res, sed voces vel conceptus.”

being said of something else (*Categories*, ch. 2), or the notion of simple predicable (*Categories*, ch. 4) – can be indifferently referred to the signifying terms of language or to the things signified by such terms.<sup>13</sup> This shows that Burley considers the semantic interpretation as the privileged interpretation of the *Categories* and that, significantly, he regards it as fully compatible with the ontological interpretation. The semantic interpretation effectively becomes a version of the ontological interpretation with just a weak metaphysical commitment.

What conclusion can we draw from all this? In spite of Burley's celebrated 'extreme realism', Burley shows prudence when he has to explain the extra-mental involvement of the categorial table. He subscribes to the Avicennian view that the *Categories* classifies things insofar as they are the subject of some specific intentional properties or second intentions. This is an application of the general Avicennian tenet that the subject-matter of logic consists of second intentions as applied to first intentions.<sup>14</sup> Since second intentions can be attached to a thing only when it is present to or existing in the mind according to an 'objective' modality of existence, and a thing can be in this state only when it is cognized, it follows that things can underlie intentional properties only when they are cognized. Two points, then, emerge about Burley's explanation of the *Categories*. First, it is evident from his commentary that Avicenna's doctrine of essence exerted a strong influence on his reading of the *Categories*: for Burley, the work classifies the external things' forms insofar as they exist objectively in the mind, and when forms are considered in

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13. *Ibid.*, f. c 2 ra-b: "Mihi tamen videtur quod hec divisio sit in membra communia tam rebus quam vocibus, quia tam in vocibus quam in rebus reperiuntur complexum et incomplexum, ut ostensum est, et ideo hec divisio non precise est in res nec in voces, sed est in communia, scilicet in complexum et incomplexum."; f. b 6 va: "Dico ergo quod liber predicamentorum est de rebus secundum quod eis insunt intentiones secunde. (...) Ad illud dubium recole me dixisse et in scriptis reliquisse quod intellectus potest facere propositionem ex quibuscumque (...) et ideo aliqua propositio componitur ex rebus extra animam, aliqua ex vocibus, aliqua ex conceptibus."

14. See the previous footnote; and *Super Praedicamenta*, f. c 6 ra-c 7 rb. For more details on Burley's Realism, see Conti 1990; Karger 1999; Conti 2000; Cesalli 2007. See also the classic Shapiro 1960 and Shapiro 1962.



such a way, they are neutral to the aspects of particularity and universality. Such objectively existent forms are moreover the formal or primary signification of terms. Second, it is also clear that, for Burley, the *Categories* must be properly accounted for as a logical treatise entailing a definite ontology (viz. predicative, bipartite, that is, exhausted by substantial and non-substantial items, and presumably hylomorphic) rather than as a specific treatise of ontology.

## 2. Problems with the Ontological Interpretation of the *Categories*

An ontological interpretation such as Burley's relies on – so to speak – a Principle of Categorial Plenitude: each thing, or each aspect, form or mode of being of a thing (whether it exists inside our outside the mind), must fall under at least and at most one category.<sup>15</sup> It is known that such a principle is not innocuous and encounters serious problems in the case of the last six categories, and also with Relation, since it is difficult to distinguish a real relation from its foundation.<sup>16</sup> Authors who put forward a linguistic or even a con-

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15. As has been said, for Burley, the categories classify things as signified by simple words (*incomplexa*), but not every simple word falls under the categories. For instance, Burley excludes from the categories simple words signifying *ficta*. See *Super Praedicamenta*, f. c 4 ra: “Intelligendum est hic quod non omne incomplexum significat substantiam vel qualitatem et cetera, quia hoc nomen ‘chimera’ est incomplexum et tamen non significat substantiam, quantitatem vel qualitatem. Idem iudicium est de quocumque alio nomine fictivo. Omne tamen incomplexum significans rem extra animam creatam per se unam, aut significat substantiam aut qualitatem et cetera.” This means that only those predicables that can have a reference in external reality can be properly categorized.

16. Burley has two arguments for the real distinction between a relation and its foundation (*Super Praedicamenta*, f. e 7 va – e 8 ra). First, the Argument of Intension and Remission of Forms: suppose that two things *a* and *b* are similar as to their whiteness and that *a* is whiter than *b*; then, if the whiteness of *a* decreases in intensity, the relationship of similarity increases in intensity. This different attitude proves that whiteness and similarity pick out different entities in the world. Second, the Argument of Contradiction: suppose that the relationship of similarity is really identical with its foundation, say whiteness, and that the same holds for the relationship of dissimilarity; it follows that similarity and dissimilarity are really identical with whiteness, and this entails a contradiction.

ceptual interpretation of the *Categories* usually point to two complications that make both the ontological interpretation and its weak version, the semantic interpretation, inconsistent.

*2.1. First Complication: There Are Things That Can Belong to More Than One Category*

The first complication is that some thing appears to be classifiable into different categories, or to be signifiable by terms that can be classified into different categories. This is precisely the argument advanced by John Buridan for excluding an interpretation of the *Categories* like Burley's. The examples given by Buridan are those of heat and of Socrates.<sup>17</sup> Consider the case of Socrates. For Buridan, Socrates belongs to the category of Substance insofar as Socrates is a man, but also to that of Quality insofar as Socrates is white and to that of Relation insofar as Socrates is supposed to be the father of a son. Unlike Burley, Buridan adopts a strongly 'semantic' version of the semantic interpretation, hence deriving the distinction of the categories from the different semantic attitudes that terms display when they are predicated of what counts as a primary substance.<sup>18</sup> Buridan's argument does not appear a knock-down one, either. The supporters of the ontological interpretation could easily counter that nothing can belong to more than one category if such a thing is taken under the same aspect. Socrates, understood as such, can be said to belong only to the category of Substance, while Socrates the White cannot be said to belong to the category of Quality: it is not Socrates the White or Socrates insofar as he is white, but Socrates' whiteness which properly belongs to the category of Quality; Socrates can belong to that category only *per accidens* or *per reductio-*

17. Cf. John Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praed.* 3, p. 17.89-92. See also *Summulae in Praedicamenta* 3.1.5, p. 14-15.5-31.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 18-19.96-130, esp. 96-101: "Sed sumuntur [*scil.* praedicamenta] ex diversis intentionibus, secundum quas termini sunt diversimode connotativi vel etiam non connotativi. Ex quibus diversis connotationibus proveniunt diversi modi praedicandi terminorum de primis substantiis; et ita directe et immediate distinguuntur penes diversos modos praedicandi de primis substantiis."

*nem* but not *per se*. The same can be said for Socrates and the category of Relation. This first strategy of attack on the ontological interpretation therefore seems to fail.

*2.2. Further Complication: There Are Things That Cannot Be Classified in Any Category*

The second complication I referred to above is the mirror image of the first one, and occurs in those cases in which a thing cannot be *per se* classified as falling into any category. For many theologians, this is the case of God, for example.<sup>19</sup> But medieval philosophers also discuss other and more philosophically interesting cases – such as that of the status of secondary substances or of time – showing how problematic it is to uphold the Principle of Categorial Plenitude when grounding the ontological interpretation. Unlike the first one, this second strategy for attacking the ontological interpretation seems to succeed. Here I cannot take into consideration all the details of such cases; I am rather interested in discussing a pair of philosophical intuitions that turn up in such cases. I shall consider each of them in turn.

*2.2.1. Things Can Be Categorized Differently According to their Different Descriptions. Hervaeus Natalis vs. Durand of St. Pourçain on the Problem of Classifying Cognition*

One possible way to dismiss the ontological interpretation is to prove that some thing can be classified into different categories, not however according to the different real aspects of that thing, as argued by Buridan, but according to different descriptions of it. The argument is the following: if a thing T belongs to a certain category C<sub>1</sub> when taken according to a given description D<sub>1</sub> and belongs to another category C<sub>2</sub> when taken according to a different description D<sub>2</sub>, then T cannot be *per se* classified in any category C. An interesting case is offered by the late medieval controversies over the nature of intellectual cognition and concepts. Must concepts, understood as the end-products of cognition, be categorized as sub-

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19. See Tabarroni 2003.

stances, or as qualities, or even as passions or habits of the mind? Moreover, must cognition be classified in the category of Action or into that of Relation? For the sake of brevity, I shall leave aside the question of the categorization of concepts, on which a great discussion was kept going at least from Duns Scotus onward, limiting my attention to the latter question.

As the debate between the Dominicans Durand of St.-Pourçain and Hervaeus Natalis shows, interpreters can have good reasons for accounting for cognition both as an action and as a relation. Durand, for instance, in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, book I, d. 27, stresses the intransitive nature of the action of cognition, since cognizing like seeing is an activity that ends with the achievement of itself, and no concept is left once the process of cognition is over.<sup>20</sup> For Durand, when we cognize an external thing, we are exerting just the action of cognizing that thing and this action is the actual goal of our intentional activity of cognizing a thing. Cognition has no real effect on the thing that is cognized: that is, cognition does not confer any additional kind of being (real or intentional) on a thing, but limits itself to modifying really the mind that actually performs the action of cognizing a thing.

Hervaeus Natalis thinks that the account of cognition as an intransitive action is inadequate, for it encounters problems in explaining mental predication and concept formation. First, he objects that, if one is inclined to treat cognition as an action, it is in any case preferable to account for it as a special kind of transitive action. Although cognition is not directly aimed at the formation of a concept in the way the action of building is directed towards the construction of a house, nonetheless an act of cognition realizes itself in such a way that once it is over, it leaves the mind with a concept. Hervaeus, however, thinks that it is much better to categorize cognition as a relation. Accounting for cognition as an action short-circuits the standard categorial theory of paronymy or denominative predication. Hervaeus explains this point by criticizing

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20. See Durand of St.-Pourçain, *Super Sent.* 1.27.2, f. 771a-vb (p. 801-807.93-255). On the debate between Hervaeus and Durand on cognition, see Friedman forthcoming; Amerini 2009; also see Koch 1927.

Radulphus Brito's account of first and second intentions. Unlike Radulphus,<sup>21</sup> Hervaeus holds that every form can denominate only the subject in which it inheres and never the object to which it relates, just as the form of whiteness can denominate as white only that in which it inheres and the form of paternity can denominate someone as father only if it inheres in him.<sup>22</sup> Accordingly, Hervaeus argues that if cognition were only an intransitive action that coincides with the direction of our mind towards the external world, certainly we could be said to be cognizing an extra-mental thing (since the form of cognizing inheres in us), but such an action or mind's direction would not suffice to establish that the external thing is cognized by us, just as the form of paternity is insufficient to justify our calling somebody else a father or even a son. Therefore, concludes Hervaeus, nobody is authorized to equate the 'active' property of cognizing an external thing, which is proper to the mind, with the 'passive' property of being cognized, which instead pertains to things. In order to better characterize the passive condition of being cognized, Hervaeus thinks that it is preferable to account for intellectual cognition as an instance of relation and hence to explain it, *qua* relational entity, as the conjunction of a relation and its converse relation. In particular, cognition is the outcome of a real relation, the 'active' one that our mind bears to the extra-mental thing and which has its foundation in the act of cognition, and of a relation of reason, the 'passive' one that the extra-mental thing bears to our mind and that is grounded upon the converse relation of cognizing itself. Here matters are quite complicated, but for our purposes it is enough to notice that, for Hervaeus, such a relation of reason is the metaphysical condition that permits the application of the ordinary categorial pattern of denominative predication to the mental sphere, and also the attribution of the accidental property of being an intention or being cognized to a thing.<sup>23</sup>

21. Cf. e.g. Radulphus Brito, *Quaestiones Porph.* 8A, p. 116.

22. Cf. Hervaeus Natalis, *Quodlibeta* 2.8.3, f. 48ra-49vb; *De verbo* 1.2, f. 10vb-11rb. I reappraise the whole debate between Hervaeus and Durand in Amerini forthcoming A.

23. Hervaeus formulates this explanation of intentionality in many places, but extensively in the *Tractatus de secundis intentionibus*, in the II and III *Quodlibet*, and in the *Tractatus de verbo*. For a comprehensive reconstruction of Hervaeus's theory of intellectual

From an Aristotelian point of view, both accounts seem to be well-based. Durand, in particular, in his *Commentary on the Sentences* refers to *Metaphysics* IX.6, where Aristotle presents cognition as a kind of actuality and as a kind of active potency,<sup>24</sup> while Hervaeus has in mind such texts as *Metaphysics*, V.15, and *Categories*, ch. 7, where Aristotle introduces the connection between the agent and the patient, or the knowledge and the knowable, as a case of relation.<sup>25</sup> Contemporary readers are left with the impression that it is impossible to settle the debate between them since both of them crucially fail to recognize that the categorial doctrine in some way collapses when applied to cognition. Intellectual cognition seems to be a special kind of intransitive action and, like every intransitive action, intellectual cognition ends with the realization of itself; in particular, such an action is completely fulfilled by putting two things, a cognizing subject and a cognized object, in relation to each other.

2.2.2. *There Are Things That Escape the Categorical Classification. Hervaeus Natalis vs. Peter Auriol on the Status of Secondary Substances*

The difficulty of classifying such entities as cognition and concepts is one possible complication for supporters of the ontological interpretation. Another line of attack is seen in what may be called the Aggregation Argument. Normally, medieval interpreters of Aristotle's *Categories* agree that composite entities such as Socrates the White or the musical man are excluded from the categories. They are beings *secundum accidens*, while the *Categories* classify only beings *secundum se*. The constituents of Socrates the White (i.e. man and whiteness) can be categorially classified, but not the entire aggregate. This situation seems to occur also in the case of secondary substances. If primary substances raise no particular problem (and the interpreters agree in putting them into the category of Substance), paradigmatic

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cognition and intentionality, see Koridze 2006 and De Rijk 2005: 251-302. For the discussion of some crucial aspects of his theory, see Pinborg 1974; Perler 2002: 294-313; Amerini 2005a: 103-140; Doyle 2006; and Amerini 2009. On the connection between intentions and denomination, see also De Libera 1999. For more on the problem of the categorization of intentions, see Robert 2010.

24. Cf. Arist., *Metaph.* 9.6 1048b18 sq.

25. Cf. Arist., *Metaph.* 5.15 1020b26-32; *Cat.* 7 7b22 sq.

secondary substances such as *man* or *animal* seem to be treatable as aggregates of some more elementary and independently identifiable components. If this is the case, they cannot belong to the category of Substance. Medieval commentators on the *Categories* seem to have had the same problems with secondary substances that the contemporary interpreters of Aristotle have<sup>26</sup>: on the one hand, in the *Categories* 5 Aristotle explicitly includes secondary substances in the category of Substance; but on the other hand, in *Metaphysics* VII.13, he argues extensively that no secondary substance (and, in general, no universal item) is substance. With respect to the nature of the *Categories*, the dilemma can be presented as follows:

- If interpreters hold an ontological interpretation and take the *Categories* as a classification of ten abstract and distinct forms or kinds of being, they can account for each non-substantial category as a distinct kind of formal being which the substance exhibits. In this case, secondary substances fully belong to the category of Substance, since they are supposed to express the essential or primary formal kind of being that a primary substance exhibits. The major problem for the interpreter, in this case, is to maintain the substantiality of primary substances.
- If, however, interpreters want to preserve the substantiality of primary substances and at the same time a maintain an ontological interpretation, they ought to opt for reading the *Categories* as a classification of concrete things and of their modes of being. In this case, though, the interpreter has the problem of justifying the substantiality of secondary substances.

Since medieval commentators on the *Categories* commonly concede that primary substances are substance, they were forced to call into question the substantiality of secondary substances. From this perspective, the supporters of the linguistic interpretation could easily prove that the ontological interpretation is an inadequate reading of the *Categories* because it leads to ruling out secondary substances from the category of Substance. One simple way of showing this consists in arguing that secondary substances, as Aristotle proves in

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26. See Loux 1991: 196 sq.

the *Metaphysics*, do not have any separate and concrete counterpart in the external world. But the supporters of the linguistic interpretation might also have another, more intriguing, reason for proving that secondary substances cannot be counted as genuine tokens of substance.

This reason revolves around the mind-dependent nature of secondary substances. Already Aquinas had pointed out on several occasions that a paradigmatic instance of secondary substance such as *man* is a complex entity that displays two characteristics: first, it can exist as such only in the mind, since the existence of universal substances in the extra-mental world can never be experienced,<sup>27</sup> and second, it is intrinsically composed of two parts, viz. an extra-mental thing's nature, on the one hand, and the intentional property of being universal and predicable, on the other hand.<sup>28</sup> The procedure imagined by Aquinas for granting *man* the two above characteristics can be summarized in the following way. When the extra-mental nature of a particular thing is cognized, it becomes the subject of the intentional properties of being universal and being predicable. It is not the nature insofar as it exists outside the mind or insofar as it actually exists in the mind that is the subject of universality and predicability, but the nature taken as 'neutral' to universality and particularity. This Avicennian 'indifferent' nature can be actually endowed with those properties only when it is understood as present to the mind. In order to make this point clear, Aquinas introduces a distinction between two ways of considering a nature understood as existing in the mind: the 'indifferent' nature, once it is cognized, can exist in the mind either as the potential or the actual subject of universality and predicability. This means that *man* can be featured either as an item (i.e. the 'indifferent' nature) that, once it has been cognized by the mind, is potentially *composed with* universality and predicability, or as an item that is actually *composed of* nature and universality/predicability. In the first case, *man* can be treated as a simple and mind-independent being, and precisely as the collection of

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27. See e.g. *Exp. Metaph.* 7.11.1536.

28. See e.g. *ST* 1.85.2.ad 2; *Quaestiones Pot.* 5.9.ad 16; *Exp. Metaph.* 7.13.1570. Aquinas extensively illustrates the nature of *man* in the *De ente et essentia* 2.



those properties that can be essentially and universally predicated of external men; in this sense, *man* can be said to belong to the category of Substance. In the second case, *man* can exist only in the mind, and *qua* the actual subject of the intentional properties of being universal and being predicabile; in this sense *man*, being an aggregate, can neither belong to a category nor be essentially predicated of external things.

Aquinas is not as explicit about the relationship between the two components as one would expect him to be, but there is evidence that he was confident that a sharp distinction between the mind-dependent intentional property and the mind-independent nature can be defended in each phase of the process of concept formation. This distinction justifies the double characterization of *man* indicated above and explains, for Aquinas, why in the *Metaphysics* Aristotle excludes *man* from being a substance, as opposed to what happens in the *Categories*.<sup>29</sup> Other philosophers and theologians, such as John Duns Scotus, were much more cautious in granting such a possible distinction between the nature as existing in the mind and the set of the intentional properties that can be predicated of it. This more cautious position, which tends to portray a secondary substance as an inextricable aggregate of two elements, was to be Peter Auriol's, while Hervaeus Natalis was to advocate Aquinas's view.

Hervaeus's position looks like a most straightforward example of a 'realistic', but not Platonic, account of secondary substances. In his *Treatise on second intentions*, Hervaeus assumes that every singular and universal thing, say Socrates and man (both of which he calls first intentions), belong to the category of Substance. The term 'Socrates' refers to a thing that exists, as such, in the extra-mental world, while 'man' to a thing that can exist only in the mind, as a unified object obtained by means of an act of abstraction. As a result, Hervaeus argues that *man* must be properly described as a thing to which the property of being universal accrues accidentally, rather than as an actual compound of thing and universality. The property of being universal accrues to a thing precisely when the

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29. See *Exp. Metaph.* 7.13.1575. For more details on the role played by Avicenna's doctrine of essence in Aquinas's account of the categories, see Pini 2004.

thing is actually cognized by the mind: that is to say, precisely when the thing bears a relation of reason to the mind. Picturing *man* in this way is necessary – observes Hervaeus – if one wants to avoid counting a predication such as ‘man is an intention’ as a case of *per se* predication. Technically, Hervaeus states this point by codifying Aquinas’s implicit distinction between ‘to be composed with (universality)’ (*compositum huic*) and ‘to be composed of (universality)’ (*compositum ex hiis*).<sup>30</sup> This distinction reveals a core conviction of Hervaeus’, namely that it is possible to say, in each phase of the process of natural cognition or categorization of external things, where the contribution given by the world ends and where that given by the mind begins. According to Hervaeus, when we refer to *man*, we are dealing with a compound entity, since we find in *man* two elements, viz. an underlying extra-mental and real nature, and the character of universality, which, being an intentional product of the mind, supervenes upon that nature. For Hervaeus, definition is the suitable instrument for spelling out the features of the underlying nature and hence for marking off the nature from the character of universality that the mind attaches to it.

While Hervaeus argues for the full substantiality of secondary substances (although he endows them with a merely mental existence), he denies with force that second intentions, such as *universality*, *species*, and the like, can belong to any category. Hervaeus’s fundamental principle is that the categories are a classification of extra-mental things and of their modes of being, so that only what is real can be categorized (and this is independent of whether the real thing actually exists, as such, in the external world, like Socrates, or only in the mind, like man). This is the way in which Hervaeus understands the division of being into mental and extra-mental introduced by Aristotle at the end of book VI of the *Metaphysics*, with only the latter articulated into the ten categories).<sup>31</sup> On this

30. Cf. Hervaeus Natalis, *SI* 3.1, p. 418 sq.

31. Cf. e.g. Hervaeus Natalis, *SI* 2.1, p. 371: “Illud quod distinguitur contra ens divisum in decem praedicamenta, distinguitur contra omne esse reale. Nam omne esse reale continetur in aliquo praedicamentorum, vel sicut species, vel sicut differentia, vel sicut principium eius quod est in genere. Sed secunda intentio est huiusmodi, quia dicit esse rationis quod Philosophus distinguit contra ens divisum in decem

interpretation, Hervaeus removes the mental dimension of objective or intentional being (i.e. that of the being of reason or second intentions) from categorial classification.

In order to clarify this aspect, let me say something more about how Hervaeus describes a second intention such as *species*. On his account, *species* can be taken (i) formally or abstractly, and (ii) materially or concretely. (i) Formally or abstractly considered, *species* indicates a merely rational property of a relational kind (i.e. specificity or being a species), namely the relational property that the mind can attach to a thing's cognized nature when it compares such a nature with other cognized natures. In our case, when the mind reflects on a cognized thing such as *man* and compares it to another cognized thing, say *animal*, it can obtain both the intentional property of *being a species* and that of *being a genus*. From an epistemic point view, *species* just like any other second intention expresses a cognitive relation, and more precisely that which a thing, once cognized, bears to our mind when our mind is comparing that thing to other cognized things (or to the external things from which the cognized thing has been derived: this happens in the case of such intentions as *universal*, *predicable*, and the like). For this reason, Hervaeus holds that *species*, although it does not express a true relation, nonetheless can be treated as a quasi-relation, since it serves a function similar to that of a true relation: *species* expresses the predicative relation that the cognized thing *man*, for instance, bears to the cognized thing *animal*.<sup>32</sup> (ii) Materially or concretely considered, however, *species* ex-

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praedicamenta vi<sup>o</sup> *Metaphysicorum*. Ergo intentio secunda distinguitur contra esse reale.”; 2.2, p. 380: “Secunda intentio, et ens rationis quod distinguitur contra ens divisum in decem praedicamenta, deficit a quacumque entitate in quocumque praedicamento. Alioquin non distingueretur contra ens commune divisum in decem praedicamenta tanquam deficiens a toto ambitu eius.” Aristotle's text referred to is *Metaph.* 6.4. 1027b28-34. On Hervaeus Natalis's realism, see Amerini 2005b.

32. Cf. Hervaeus Natalis, *SI* 2.4, p. 399: “Genus, species, et consimilia communiter dicuntur significare quasdam relations sive habitudines. Ad cuius evidentiam sciendum quod praedicta entia rationis, sicut non sunt substantia nec qualitas, sic nec sunt relationes reales in genere relationis existentes. Et hoc patet ex supradictis quia talia non dicunt aliquod ens reale existens in aliquo praedicamento. Tamen, licet non sint relationes reales, magis assimilantur relationibus quam aliis entibus. Et minus recedunt a ratione relationis quam a ratione aliorum praedicamentorum.”

presses nothing but a first intention, for instance *man*, so that *species* does not refer to anything different from that to which *man* also refers.<sup>33</sup> In conclusion, both formally and materially considered, *species* cannot be in any category.

I shall not dwell further on the details of Hervaeus's theory of intention. What has been said should suffice to show that he works with a restricted categorial model, since he admits that there is a part of being that escapes the categorial classification. While, on the one hand, he elaborates an ontological interpretation of the *Categories*,<sup>34</sup> on the other hand, he postulates a region of being – that populated by second intentions or beings of reasons, like *species* – that is outside the categorial table. Such a region of being can be structured in analogy to the domain of real being (in the domain of beings of reason, one can find quasi-substances, quasi-qualities, quasi-relations, and so on), and, to a certain degree, this is necessary in order to extend the standard categorial theory of predication to the mental realm. But properly speaking, the categorial table cannot absorb such entities, for if it were to do so, Hervaeus claims, one would fall back into a Platonic realism of universals.

Paradoxically, the qualifications introduced by Hervaeus sound like an argument against his ontological interpretation of the *Categories*. There are two problems with Hervaeus's explanation of the categories: first, the difficulty of giving an epistemological procedure for distinguishing the contribution of the world from that of the mind; second, the double status of a universal intention such as *man*, which is reflected by the double status of a second intention such as *species*: if the inclusion of *man* in the categories depends on the different considerations we can have of it, it follows that *man* in itself can be said neither to belong nor not to belong to the categories. In one respect, *man* can be seen as an extra-mental thing and a substance. This especially holds when *man* occurs in a predicate-position within a standard essential proposition, namely when it does the job of shorthand for a collection of properties that can be essentially predicated of the external particular men to which the

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33. Cf. Hervaeus Natalis, *SI* 4.1, p. 458-459, 468-470.

34. See *Quodlibeta* 1.9, ff. 18vb-22rb, esp. 20va-22rb.

subject-term refers. In this case, *man* can be accounted for as a first intention. But in another respect, *man* can exist only in the mind, as Aquinas had recognized in his *Commentary on the Metaphysics*. In this case, *man* is considered as such, namely as the subject of some intentional properties; as a consequence, in this case *man* must be accounted for as a second intention, or at least as the foundation of such second intentions as *species*, *universal*, *predicable*, and the like. In one respect, therefore, *man* can be included in the categories, in another it cannot. The case of *species* can be managed in a similar way: in one respect, *species* designates something that is aggregated of a first and a second intention, but in another respect, it only designates a first intention in which a second intention can accidentally inhere and be founded. In the first case, *species* cannot be reduced to any category, in the second case it seems to be classifiable under one category or another.

In his *Commentary on the Sentences*, Peter Auriol rejects ten points of Hervaeus's theory of intentions. With respect to the present issue, it is worth noting that Auriol criticizes Hervaeus's conception of the categories precisely concerning the possibility of distinguishing the cognized thing (e.g. man) from the mode of cognition (e.g. universality). The fifth defect of Hervaeus's theory, according to Auriol's list, is the removal of second intentions from the categories.<sup>35</sup> What is wrong with this exclusion? Auriol thinks that two points of Hervaeus's argument are problematic: first, the argument invoked by Hervaeus for removing second intentions can be applied to first intentions as well;<sup>36</sup> second, the limitation of the range of validity of the categorial table suggested by Hervaeus is unjustified. Auriol rectifies both points. As to the first, he argues that each category is divided into primary and secondary items; since secondary substances are none other than intentions, it follows that first intentions can belong to the categories.<sup>37</sup> In other words, Auriol suggests that the property of being an intention is not an obstacle to

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35. Cf. Peter Auriol, *Super Sent.* 1.23.2, p. 723.24-25.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 723.25-28.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 724.1-7.

a thing's inclusion in a category.<sup>38</sup> Thus, if *man* can be classified under the category of Substance, the same must be true for *species* too. In addition, Auriol struggles to prove that every second intention is not just a relation in a metaphorical way, but properly satisfies the formal condition, that is to say, the definition, of relation.<sup>39</sup> This conviction leads Auriol to his second point. Auriol thinks that it is better to invert Hervaeus's line of reasoning and extend the range of validity of the categorial table instead of restricting it. For this purpose, Auriol suggests returning to Boethius and Simplicius's linguistic interpretations of the *Categories*, and therefore explain the categorial table in an old-fashioned way, as a classification of simple predicable items.<sup>40</sup> *Prima facie*, no reference to the inner structure of the classified items referred to by simple predicables seems to be relevant for a correct categorization of those items. So if the *Categories* are supposed to classify some basic linguistic *incomplexa*, only what is syntactically (or externally) an aggregate or *complexum* must be excluded from the *Categories*, and this holds both for real and intentional aggregates.<sup>41</sup> Auriol accepts this conclusion, but not unqualifiedly. For while he endorses this 'more logical' or conceptual

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38. Cf. *Super Sent.* 1.36.3 ad 6. Here Auriol argues that the categories do not classify things as they are precisely in the extra-mental world, for otherwise only particulars would fall under the categories.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 725-726.27-7.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 724.12-23 ; also see p. 728.22-26: "Si etiam ulterius diceretur quod predicamenta secundum hoc non sunt decem genera entium sive rerum-cuius oppositum dicit Boetius in *Predicamentis*-, dicendum quod Boetius accipit 'ens' et 'rem' in suo toto ambitu prout claudit omne concepibile, sive sit ens reale sive ens rationis."

41. *Ibid.*, p. 726.7-14: "Est igitur considerandum quod istud dictum procedit ex falsa ymaginatione. Ymaginantur namque communiter loquentes quod distinctio predicamentorum sit distinctio verarum rerum, et quod nichil sit in predicamentis nisi sit vera res; et innituntur quammaxime verbo Philosophi in VI *Metaphysice*, qui postquam divisit ens in entia in anima et entia que sunt extra, dicit quod dimittamus ens quod est in anima, et tunc assumit ens quod est extra et dividit illud in decem predicamenta. Hec autem ymaginatio non est vera." Auriol gives two reasons for excluding the *Categories* be a classification of things in themselves: first, like Buridan, Auriol stresses that something (such as the heat) can be classified in different categories; second, there are some categorial items (such as time) whose being can be established only by means of a mind's act (see pp. 726-727.14-11).

explanation of the categories, he also devotes a great part of his theory of intentions to showing that a secondary substance such as *man* is an intention in its own right and that this does not prevent it from being classified under a category. Incidentally, this is also what makes him conclude, against Hervaeus, that it is all right to say that ‘man is an intention’ is a *per se* predication.<sup>42</sup> In order to avoid inconsistency with his own view of secondary substances as aggregate entities in which a nature and its intentional properties are joined together in an indistinguishable way, Auriol distinguishes a logical from a metaphysical explanation of the *Categories*.<sup>43</sup> Accordingly, *man* is a metaphysically composite entity just like *species*, being a composite of an external thing’s nature and some intentional properties, and so it cannot be put *per se* in any category. Metaphysically speaking, the categories must be accounted for as a classification of things *qua* extra-mentally existing, and in this sense, the categorial table is capable of catching only singular substances and singular accidents. More specifically, Auriol argues that only five categories – Substance, Quality, Quantity, Action, and Passion – are in some way able to pick out extra-mental entities; the remaining categories collect only linguistic items that in various ways refer to the metaphysical items included in the above five categories. Things are different for the logician, since *man* is a simple predicable item, just like *species*, and as such it can be classified under the category of Substance. In brief, Auriol requires that the logical items classified in the cate-

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42. *Ibid.*, p. 719.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 727-728.16-3: “Vel possumus dicere quod metaphisicus multo aliter dividit entia – qui considerat modos essendi rerum – quam logicus dividat dicibile in complexum in decem predicamenta; omnem enim vocem dicibilem et predicabilem necesse est reduci ad aliquod predicamentum secundum logicum. (...) Tenendum est itaque pro regula generali quod omnis vox incomplexa – quam Philosophus vocat ‘dicibile’ – significans conceptum aliquem positivum est vere in predicamento, sive illi conceptui correspondeat res similis in existentia (cuiusmodi sunt ‘Sortes’ et ‘Plato’ et <cetera> nomina individuorum), sive huiusmodi conceptus sint res que sunt extra per intellectum posite in esse intentionali alio et alio (cuiusmodi sunt ‘animal’, ‘homo’, ‘albedo’ et ‘color’ et cetera nomina substantiarum secundarum aut accidentium que possunt dici res secunde), sive conceptus ille sit totaliter formatus ab intellectu, sicut ‘genus’, ‘species’, ‘sillogismus’ et sic de <ceteris> intentionibus secundis.”

gories must satisfy two conditions: (1) they must be simple in structure, and (2) they must be predicable of external things. It follows that not every simple predicable item belongs to a category. Indeed, for Auriol, this is true only for such predicable items as are really simple, and only those that are subordinated to a positive and simple concept are such. Privative and negative predicables belong to the categories only in a reductive way, while fictitious predicables do not belong to any category.<sup>44</sup>

Peter's position raises many problems which I cannot consider here. Here is one that is intimately related to the topic of this paper: if simple predicables (*incomplexa*) are such as are subordinated to simple concepts, and the *Categories* are supposed to classify them,<sup>45</sup> it will be difficult to keep second-intention predicables in the categories.<sup>46</sup> The reason is that their corresponding concepts are obtained by comparing or combining first-intention concepts. Peter's criticism of Hervaeus is nonetheless of a certain philosophical interest. Among other things, it shows that in the age of Peter and Hervaeus some topics such as the categorization of mental entities, states and processes, the extension of the standard categorial theory of predication to the mental realm, the metaphysical status of universal predicables, were all regarded as central for a correct understanding of Aristotle's *Categories*. In particular, Peter's distinction between a logical and a metaphysical reading of the *Categories* seems to have been considered as the key to reconciling the ontology of the *Categories* with that of the *Metaphysics*. Historically, however, the proposed reconciliation was not new. Already Aquinas had employed such a distinction to make sense of the *Metaphysics*' argument that the universal is always said of a subject and, since what is said of a subject is not a substance, the universal is not a substance<sup>47</sup> – an argument which clearly conflicts with the doctrine of *Categories* 5. In the corre-

44. See the previous footnote. Also see *Super Sent.* 1.23.2, p. 728.7-26, and pp. 729-731.

45. See *Super Sent.* 1.23.2, p. 724.12-14: "Philosophus in *Praedicamentis* dividit omne dicibile incomplexum – quod non est aliud quam vox significans simplicem conceptum – in decem predicamenta"; also Proem. 6.5.

46. For more details on Auriol's doctrine of categories, I refer to Amerini forthcoming B.

47. *Metaph.* 7.13 1038b15-16.



sponding passage of his *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Aquinas argues that the metaphysician considers the things as they are in themselves, and as a consequence, he takes as equivalent the categorial relations of being in something else and of being predicated of something else. For the metaphysician, thus, no secondary substance is a substance, for it is metaphysically predicable of – or reducible to – a primary substance. The logician, on the other hand, differentiates between the two categorial relationships, and to him all secondary substances are substance, since they are said of primary substances but are not in them, and only this latter condition counts as relevant for ruling out a thing from the category of Substance.<sup>48</sup> The distinction became fairly standard in commentaries on the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics*. Peter Auriol, though, significantly modifies Aquinas's argument, since he not only appeals to predication but also to the composite nature of secondary substances in order to remove them from a metaphysical categorization of beings. This is the result of Auriol's account of intentions. As already mentioned, in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, I, d. 23, Auriol strives to prove that every secondary substance is an intention in its own right, and that, *pace* Hervaeus, within it the extra-mental thing's nature and the property of being an intention are inseparably mixed.<sup>49</sup>

### 3. Conclusion

The rise of the theory of intentionality and the related debates on the nature of intellectual cognition and concepts gave medieval philosophers and theologians an occasion to rethink the nature of Aristotle's *Categories*. Here I have presented a pair of significant cases: first, that of the categorial classification of intellectual cognition and second, that of the categorial classification of secondary substances. Obviously, there are other situations where the mind is called on to play a role in identifying and distinguishing categories from each other. Peter Auriol, for instance, puts a particular emphasis on the category of time, developing what Aristotle says at the

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48. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Exp. Metaph.* 7.13.1576.

49. Cf. Peter Auriol, *Super Sent.* 1.23.2, pp. 715-716.19-2, 716-719, and 737-738.22-3.

end of the *Metaphysics*, VI.4. In recent years, this aspect of Auriol's thought has been accurately investigated by other scholars.<sup>50</sup> I think, however, that much must still be done in order to appreciate the full impact of the debates about the relationship between categories and intentions on the medieval interpretations of Aristotle's *Categories*.

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50. Cf. e.g. Kobusch 2004.

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