Question Six

IS “EQUALITY” IN THE DIVINE A REAL RELATION?

6.1 Once the relation of origin* in the divine was discussed, the issue of the common relations* arose. Here there was but one question: Is equality in the divine a real relation?*

Arguments Pro and Con

[1] It is argued that it is: Any relation that has a real foundation and extremes that are really distinct is real. The relation in question is such. Therefore [it is real]. Proof of the minor: In the divine there is real magnitude, namely, that of the essence; also the persons, said to be equal to one another, are really distinct.

6.2 To the contrary: Every real relation is based on either action and passion* or quantity.² In God no real relation is based on quantity, for “God is great without quantity,” as Augustine³ puts it. Therefore, no relation there is real unless based on action and passion; but the only relationship of this sort is that of origin, and equality is not a relationship of origin since it has the same basis in both terms of the relation.

6.3 Besides, magnitude, like essence, is the same in all three persons. Therefore the terms or extremes related are not really distinct, and consequently the relation itself is not real.

Body of the Question

6.4 Three points must be considered here. First, is there any real foundation for the equality of the divine persons? Second, is there a real distinction of extremes? Third, is this equality of the extremes something in them extrinsically in virtue of its foundation?

ARTICLE 1

Is there a Real Foundation for Equality in the Divine?

[2] 6.5 The first article contains three points. First of all, the common basis or foundation for equality needs to be investigated. Second,

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Arts. Scotus, Ord. 1, d.19, nn.1-28 (v, 265-79); d.31 (vi, 203-22).
² Aristotle, Metaph. v, c.15 (1029b25-33).

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1 Aristotle, Praeclaram. c.6 (6a27-35).
² Ibid., c.8 (11a18-19).
³ Aristotle, Metaph. v, c.15 (1021b10-15).
2. The Foundation of Equality in God

[3] 6.7 As for the second part of this article, namely what the foundation for equality in the divine in particular would be, Augustine, it seems, provides an answer when he says of the three divine persons: "No one precedes any other as regards eternity, nor exceeds another in magnitude, nor surpasses another in power, for the Father is not anterior to the Son nor greater than he." And we could add: Neither is he more powerful. What the Philosopher said provides proof of Augustine's assertion, for if equality has reference to quantity, since quantity is divided primarily into continuous and discrete, there can be no equality according to discrete quantity. There is only a trinity there, which is not number, or, if it is a plurality, the lesser part is somehow part of the greater and thus is unequal to it. Continuous quantity, however, is divided into permanent and successive. In God there is no successive quantity, although there is something corresponding to it, namely the quantity of duration which is properly called "eternity." Permanent quantity in creatures is commonly called magnitude or mass, and everything corresponding to it in the divine is called magnitude. Therefore, from what the Philosopher says Augustine's position follows, namely, that in the divine what is equal refers either to magnitude or to eternity.

[4] 6.8 Second, we explain Augustine's remark, for it seems from what we have just said that his addition "nor in power" is superfluous. The answer, however, is that the equality of some things is regarded properly as based upon something absolute and intrinsic to them. Thus from the fact that some beings have some form to an equal degree it follows as a consequence that they can act upon extrinsic things to an equal degree. Equality of power, therefore, is not, properly speaking, distinct from the equality of magnitude, but it represents, as it were, an explication of the kind of equality in magnitude, namely, that characteristic of an active form. Thus creatures which possess heat in equal magnitudes have equal power to heat. Consequently, counting the equality which stems from the comparison to extrinsic beings together with that based on what is intrinsic, there are three forms of equality. Properly speaking, however, there are only two, those based on what is absolute and intrinsic, namely equality with reference to magnitude and with reference to eternity. Perhaps that is why Augustine in his reply only mentions these two, and omits power, since he says merely that "The Father is not anterior to the Son nor greater than he." He does not add: "Nor more powerful."

6.9 There is another query in regard to Augustine's remark: Why not consider equality in other matters? For the Father and Son are equal as regards wisdom, goodness, justice, and other such attributes.

6.10 I reply: They are equal in wisdom only insofar as there is one magnitude. If they are equal as regards some essential perfection, the proximate reason for the equality is always the magnitude of that perfection. Consequently, through magnitude alone Augustine understands every essential perfection to be the basis for equality, for no perfection serves as a foundation for it except under the aspect of its magnitude.

8 Is Each of these Foundations for Equality Real?

[5] 6.11 [Three questions] To answer the third question in this article, we must clear up three points: First, is magnitude in God something extramantal? Second, is eternity there in that way? Third, is power also?

1) First question: Is magnitude in God something extramantal?

6.12 [Three subquestions] Three further questions need to be answered before we can reply to the first. First, in what sense can magnitude be said to exist in the divine? Second, since magnitude is always the amount of something, if it is to be extramantal, we first need something extramantal of which it is the magnitude. Third, is the magnitude of this something also there extramantly? Thus the complete solution of the first question about the reality of magnitude depends on how we answer these three.

6.13 [First subquestion] Of the first, the Philosopher says: "Great and small and greater and smaller, both in themselves and when taken relatively to each other, are by their own nature attributes of what is quantitative; but these names are transferred to other things also." He wants to say that great and small, taken either in themselves or absolutely or taken relatively, pertain of themselves to quantity proper, but in a transferred sense they are applied to

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7 Ps. Augustine, Fulgentius of Ruspe, De fide ad Petrum. c.1, n.4: PL 40, 674; CCSL 91A, 714.

8 Cf. Duns Scotus, Ord. 1, d.19, nn.8 and 12 (v. 267-68, 270); d.31, nn.8-11 (v. 205-208).

9 Aristotle, Metaph. V, c.15 (1020a23-26).
other things as well. This is sufficiently clear from reason, for the Philosopher would not deny that equality pertains to individuals of the same species in any genus and inequality pertains to the species in any genus. Consequently, since he claims equal and unequal are predicated only with reference to quantity, then quantity somehow pertains to every single being of any genus. Hence if great and small according to him are proper attributes of quantity, in their transferred sense, at least, they are transcendals and proper attributes of the whole realm of being. Now Augustine\(^{10}\) calls this “great” in the Philosopher’s transferred sense, not greatness of mass, but magnitude of goodness and perfection: “In those things which are not great in mass, to be greater is the same as to be better.” It is clear then that “great” in the first sense (i.e., in Aristotle’s proper sense or what Augustine calls “great in mass”) is not applicable either to God or to any spiritual being. Nevertheless, we can assume they are “great” in the Philosopher’s transferred meaning of the term, or in what Augustine calls “great in goodness, virtue, or perfection,” for magnitude of this sort is transcendental and belongs to everything in its fashion.

6.14 [Second subquestion] As for the second, let us avoid what is dubious and say for certain that the essence is there extrametally, something we also pointed out in article one, Question One [1.5].

6.15 [Third subquestion] From this we infer immediately the answer to the third question. The divine essence \(qua\) essence has its own real or extrametally magnitude. This is proved from authority and from two rational arguments.

[Proof from authority] Damascene\(^{11}\) is our authority, when he calls the essence a kind of “infinite and limitless sea of substance.” As we have said repeatedly, he calls the essence a “sea” because it enjoys a kind of priority and contains primarily all the divine perfections, and precisely under this aspect, he calls it “infinite and limitless.” The divine essence \(qua\) essence, then, is infinite. From this we argue further that the essence is infinite extrametally, for as a “sea” it is infinite, and as that which is absolutely first, this sea is real or extrametally. But the magnitude proper to the essence is called “infinity.” Therefore, it has this extrametally. The minor, as regards some sense of magnitude at least, is sufficiently obvious, for just as quantitative infinity refers to magnitude in the proper sense,

6.16 [First proof from reason] Reason provides this argument: Intensive infinity pertains to the divine essence really or extrametally. But such infinity is the magnitude proper to the essence. Therefore [magnitude pertains to the essence really or extrametally].

Proof of the major: As was pointed out in the preceding question [5.10], intensive infinity\(^*\) does not refer to a property of the being to which it belongs, but rather represents an intrinsic mode\(^*\) which would still be present apart from all other properties. Therefore, infinity can only belong to its subject intrinsically in the real or extrametally order.

Proof of the minor: It is the characteristic of the entity of any absolute quiddity that is apt by nature to measure or be measured, that it be either finite or infinite, and hence, if it is repugnant to it to be finite, it will be infinite. But the divine essence is this sort of quiddity.

One might also want to argue in proof of the major that intensive infinity could not pertain to a conceptual relation, for then such a relation of the mind would be a pure perfection.\(^*\) Therefore, neither can infinity pertain to someone only in virtue of a conceptual relation, but it must pertain to it extrametally. But the inference is not valid, for the first causality cannot pertain to someone by reason of a conceptual relation either, and yet it does not follow that the first causality pertains to it really or extrametally.

6.17 [Second proof from reason] A second argument from reason is this: The mode characteristic of the beatific object \(qua\) beatific object exists in reality and extrametally. But intensive infinity is this kind of mode in the divine essence. Therefore, it exists there extrametally and consequently magnitude does also.

6.18 [Proof of the major based on the distinction between intuitive and abstract cognition] Proof of the major is found in the perfection of the beatific act. To understand better what is involved, it is helpful to distinguish two acts of the intellect at the level of simple apprehension or intellecction of a simple object. One is indifferent as to whether the object is existing or not, and also whether it is present in reality or not. We often experience this act in ourselves, for universals and the essences of things we grasp equally well whether they exist extrametally in some subject or not, or whether

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\(^{10}\) Augustine, *De Trin.* vi, c.8, n.9: PL 42, 989; CCSL 50, 238.

\(^{11}\) Damascene, *De fide orth.* i, c.9: PG 94, 835; ed. Buytaert c.9, p.49.
we have an instance of them actually present or not. We also have [an empirical or] a posteriori* proof of this, for scientific knowledge* of a conclusion or understanding of a principle can be equally present to the intellect whether what they are about is existing or not, or is present or absent. In either case, then, one can have an equal understanding of that term on which an understanding of the principle or conclusion depends. This act of understanding, which can be called “scientific,” because it is a prerequisite condition for knowing the conclusion and understanding the principle, can very appropriately be called “abstractive” because it “abstracts” the object from existence or non-existence, from presence or absence.

[8] 6.19 But there is another act of understanding, though we do not experience it in ourselves as certainly, but it is possible. It is knowledge precisely of a present object as present and of an existing object as existing. Proof of this: Every perfection which is a perfection of cognition absolutely and which can be present in a faculty of sense knowledge can pertain eminently to an intellective cognitional faculty. But it is a matter of perfection in the act of knowing qua knowledge that what is first known be attained perfectly, and this is so when it is attained in itself and not just in some diminished or derivative likeness of itself. On the other hand, a sense power has such perfection in its knowledge, because it can attain an object in itself as existing and present in its real existence, and not just diminutively in a kind of imperfect likeness of itself. Therefore this perfection also pertains to an intellective power in the act of knowing. It could not pertain to it however unless it could know an existing thing and know it as present either in its own existence or in some intelligible object that contains the thing in question in an eminent* way, which we are not concerned with at present.

Such knowledge of the existent qua existent and present is something an angel has about himself. For Michael does not know himself in the way he would know Gabriel if Gabriel were annihilated, viz., by abstractive cognition, but he knows himself as existing and as existing in a way that is identical with himself. He also is aware of his intellection in this way if he reflects upon it, considering it not just as any object in which one has abstracted from existence or non-existence in the way he would think of another angel’s knowledge, if such did not actually exist; rather he knows himself to be knowing, that is to say, he knows his knowledge as something exist-

ing in himself. This knowledge possible for an angel, therefore, is also simply possible for our intellective power, because we have the promise that we shall be like the angels. Now this sort of intellection can properly be called “intuitive,” because it is an intuition of a thing as existing and present.13

6.20 Applying this to the case at hand, we can say that the beatific act of the intellect cannot be one of abstractive cognition; it must be intuitive. Since abstractive cognition concerns equally the existent and the nonexistent, if the beatific act were of this sort one could be beatifically happy with a nonexistent object, which is impossible. Also, abstractive knowledge is possible where the object is not attained in itself but only in some likeness. Beatitude, on the contrary, can never be found unless the beatific object is reached immediately and in itself. And this intuitive intellection is what some call, and rightly so, face-to-face vision, basing themselves on the words of the Apostle:14 “We see now through a mirror in an obscure manner, but then face to face.”

[9] 6.21 From this the major [in 6.17] is manifest. If the beatific act is necessarily an intuition of its object, then it is knowledge of that object as existing and as present in its own existence. Therefore, every condition that is required per se of a beatific object must pertain to it per se in its real existence, and indeed in its real existence as something present. Hence we have our major.

6.22 [Proof of the minor] We prove the minor [of 6.17], viz., that infinity is an intrinsic per se condition of the beatific object. No intellect, or will for that matter, is perfectly satisfied by any object unless it contains the full plenitude of its first object, that is to say, unless its primary object finds its highest possible expression in that object. Such plenitude in the first object of the intellect or will can only be infinity. Therefore, no power capable of beatification can be content with anything unless it is infinite. Infinity then is a per se condition of any object that is fully satisfying and therefore beatific.

Proof of the major: Since a power is naturally inclined to its first object, it is not satisfied with anything short of the fullest expression of that object and will indeed push on farther to where that realization can be found.

Proof of the minor: Anything compatible with infinity does not

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13 Cf. Duns Scotus, Ord. ii, d.3, q.9, nn.6-7 (ed. Vivès xii, 212-14); q.11, nn.11-12 (ibid., 278-79); iii, d.14, q.5, nn.4ff. (xiv, 52ff.); iv, d.10, q.8, nn.5ff. (xvii, 285ff.); d.49, n.12 (xxi, 17-18).

14 1 Corinthians 13:12.
find its fullest expression in anything that is not infinite. This is obvious. Infinity alone represents the full measure of anything consistent with it. Now infinity is not incompatible with the first object of either intellect or will, for whether this object be “being” or “the true” or something similar characteristic of all things, or whether it be the “First Being” or “First Truth,” which virtually contains the others, it is clear that infinity is not inconsistent with it. Therefore, it does not find its fullest expression in anything short of the infinite.

6.23 As for this first question on magnitude, then, we have concluded that in the divine there is something extramental possessing magnitude, namely the essence, and that its magnitude is something real and extramental. We also know what sort of magnitude it is. According to the Philosopher, it is magnitude not in a proper but in a transferred sense. In Augustine’s terminology, it is not magnitude of mass but of perfection.15

6.24 [Objections and answers] In objection to what has been said, there is Augustine’s statement16: “In him ‘to be’ and ‘to be great’ are identical.” For him, then, magnitude is fused with the essence and hence no longer exists there in any proper sense of the word. But magnitude is a foundation for equality only as magnitude, not indeed of mass, but of virtue.

6.25 I reply: The divine essence would still retain its own magnitude or proper infinity, even though—to assume the possible or impossible—it were stripped of all its properties. For it has its own intrinsic degree just as something finite has its own finite. Man, for instance, even if one abstracts from all his properties, still retains his essential finitude in the hierarchic classification of beings. In this sense, then, I concede that “to be” and “to be great” are identical in God. And there is a sense also in which it is correct to say “to be great” is even more intrinsic to God than is “to be just” or “to be wise,” for “great” does not express a property or attribute as “just” and “wise” do. Greatness, therefore, is indeed “fused with him” because of the supreme identity of magnitude and essence. But when you infer from this that magnitude no longer exists there in any proper sense of the word, the implication must be denied. Even in creatures magnitude is so fused with its perfection that it does not represent something really other than that of which it is the degree, yet it retains its own character as magnitude insofar as this is proper


16 Augustine, De Trin. v, c.10, n.11: PL 42, 918; CCSL 50, 218.

6.26 Neither in God nor even in creatures is there any diametrical opposition between “to be fused with” and “to remain,” so long as one correctly understands the fusion as implying a real identity and the remaining to mean it retains its own quiddity. “It remains” does not entail “it remains really distinct.” It only implies here that its proper quiddity has not been destroyed either by its form perishing or by being reduced to potentiality or by fusion into a [chemical] compound. In the first way fire becomes water. An instance of the second would be if God reduced fire to prime matter alone without form. The third would be if fire combined with water to form a composite substance in which neither retained its actuality. In none of these ways does anything “fuse with the divine” and only if it did pass away in some such fashion would it no longer remain. And “it remains, i.e., in its proper, perfect, and full actuality” does not entail “it remains really distinct.” If this question were concerned with the real distinction, we could go into this.18 But this suffices for our purpose, because not only in God but also in creatures the magnitude of perfection remains insofar as it is the proper basis for real equality and nevertheless without any real distinction from it, viz., the essence.

6.27 But these remarks give rise to another doubt. As magnitude is related to essence, so equality seems to be related to identity. But if magnitude is fused with the essence, then equality dissolves into identity, and thus there will not be the three common relations of equality, similarity, and identity in God.

6.28 One could admit here that equality is not distinct from identity and similarity to the same degree that these two are differentiated from each other, but that what equality asserts is a modality proper to both identity and similarity if they are to be perfect. For, to assume the impossible, if the Father’s divinity were greater than

17 Ibid., vi, c.8, n.9: PL 42, 929; CCSL 50, 238.

18 Cf. Duns Scotus, Ord. I, d.8, nn.185, 209, 213-17, 220, 222 (iv, 252-53, 269, 273-74, 276-77); d.26, nn.80-82 (vi, 36-37).
the Son’s divinity, there would still be some measure of identity between them but it would not be perfect because of the lack of equality. In like manner, if one person has greater knowledge and another less knowledge, they have a certain similarity, but it is not perfect because their knowledge, on which their similarity is based, is unequal. The same magnitude in the foundation, be it the basis for identity or for similarity, therefore, results in the identity or similarity being perfect. Equality, then, expresses the mode of similarity and the mode of identity, namely, that it is perfect. In the same way, identical magnitude means that the basis for the relationship is perfect.

6.29 [The unity needed in the foundation of equality] The final point we must examine in this section on magnitude concerns the unity which we said [in 6.6] appears to be required either per se or in some other way in the foundation for equality. Now we must recognize that if any unity of magnitude is real or really exists anywhere, it certainly is to be found in the divine. For here the unity is numerical and the two said to be equal share the same individual magnitude, whereas with other things of the same magnitude, there is no numerical unity though, according to some, there is perhaps some universal or conceptual unity, which I am not concerned about here. What is certain, however, is that no unity is more real than numerical unity, and that this is to be found properly in God as something common to all three persons. As Damascene\textsuperscript{19} says: “In all created persons, what is diverse is considered to be real, whereas what they have in common, their interconnection and unity, is regarded as the work of the mind. But the converse is true of the holy and incomprehensible Trinity, for what is common and one is considered to be real, since each is no less one with the others than he is with himself, whereas diversity is due to the consideration of the mind.”

6.30 There is also a rational argument for this. According to the \textit{Metaphysics}\textsuperscript{20} “one” and “many” are the immediate subdivisions of being. If the magnitude of the essence shared by Father and Son is something real and extramantal, as was proved, then magnitude will be either one or many. Now it is clear there are not several magnitudes of different kinds, nor are there several of the same kind, for the same essence numerically is not great by virtue of several magnitudes of the same sort.

\textsuperscript{19} Damascene, \textit{De fide orth.} 1, c.8: PG 94, 827; ed. Buylaert c. 8, pp. 42-43.
\textsuperscript{20} Aristotle, \textit{Metaph.} x, c.6 (1056b8).

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6.31 [Conclusion] Our first conclusion then in this initial article in brief is this: The grounds for being equally great in God are real and extramantal as regards everything needed as a basis for equality. The grounds there are equal or even greater than we find elsewhere in any foundation for equality.

2) Second question: Is eternity a real or extramantal basis for equality?

6.32 Now we must consider eternity. It is clear that eternity characterizes something that is really there extramentially, for it characterizes existence \textit{qua} existence, and existence is there extramentially; otherwise nothing would be existing there extramentially. Therefore, we have something extramantal to which eternity belongs, but it is necessary to inquire whether eternity \textit{qua} eternity pertains to it extramentially.

6.33 [For the affirmative view] It seems that it does: Just as intensive infinity expresses an intrinsic mode of essence \textit{qua} essence, so eternity \textit{qua} eternity expresses an intrinsic mode of existence \textit{qua} existence. Therefore, since existence, like being, is there extramentially, so for like reasons their respective intrinsic modes are also there extramentially.

In support of this are the words of Dionysius\textsuperscript{21}: “God is existing, not in just any way, but simply and in an unlimited way he has the whole of existence in himself beforehand, which is why he is called the ‘King of ages.’” And he goes on to say: “He gives existence to all existing things and, as their cause, he is their very existence and he is before ages, for he is ‘age of ages’ who exists before ages.” And he seems to attribute “age of ages”—which means eternity—to God in the same sense that he is existing, namely, simply and without limitation.

6.34 [Arguments for the negative view] Against this interpretation are the words of Boethius\textsuperscript{22}: “Eternity is endless life, possessed perfectly and all at once,” and the similar statement of Anselm in the \textit{Monologion}\textsuperscript{23}. Richard’s remark\textsuperscript{24} that “Eternal being results from the absence of a beginning, an end and all mutability” must be

\textsuperscript{22} Boethius, \textit{De consolatione philosophiae} v. prosa 6: PL 68, 858; CCSL 94, 101.
\textsuperscript{23} Anselm, \textit{Monol.} c.18 (17): PL 158, 167; ed. Schmitt 1, 32.
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corrected and interpreted in the light of the preceding where “life” means existence as actual and perfect, just as it does in this text from John\textsuperscript{26}: “Just as the Father possesses life in himself, so has he granted it to the Son to have life in himself.”

Eternity then includes “life” as part of its connotation, because life is the quasi subject or foundation for eternity. Now it is certain that life, like perfect existence, is in God extraentrally. But the other three components of the Boethian definition, namely, “endless” (which excludes cessation), “all at once” (which excludes success), and “possessed perfectly” (which excludes dependence and participation), only add to “life” a positive or negative relation, it seems. The negative relation would be the denial of termination, succession, and dependence, whereas the positive, potential, or aptitudinal relation would be expressed by “endless” (which seems to express that it can coexist per se with any duration or existence whatsoever), by “all at once” (which says that it can coexist with anything whatsoever without variation or succession), and by “possessed perfectly” (which implies it exists of itself with full independence). Now this is the most proper description we find of eternity, and only one element, viz., “life,” expresses something extraentrally whereas the other three, it seems, do not, because they either imply per se the negation of some extrinsic imperfection or assert some aptitudinal or potential relationship to something extrinsic, and in neither case would there be anything there extraentrally. If this be so, then it follows that eternity qua eternity will not be there extraentrally either.\textsuperscript{26}

[15] 6.35 If you concede this conclusion, then you have a counter-reply to the view previously proposed [in 6.33], namely, that eternity is the proper mode of divine existence even as infinity is for the divine essence. For the parity must be denied, since, to assume the impossible, if the divine essence were suddenly to pass away, both essence and existence would have had their intrinsic mode of intensive infinity, but the existence would not have had eternity, which means durational infinity. This adds to intensive infinity only a denial of cessation or a conceptual relation of potentiality, namely, of coexisting with any possible being, a relationship which is mind-dependent.

This appears clear from the following: If an angel were annihilated tomorrow, he would not have any different intrinsic mode in

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his nature than if he remained forever, as he actually will, and—according to some—without succession, for they deny this is present in aeternity.\textsuperscript{*} Therefore, it is impossible to think of perpetual duration as some extraentrally quantity in God that is other than the intensive infinity of either essence or existence and which is called the magnitude of one or the other. Any additional factor is at most a conceptual relation or a negation. And while it is true that existence, like essence, has a mode intrinsic to it, that mode is nothing but intrinsic infinity. It is not eternity qua eternity, or endless duration qua endless duration.

[16] 6.36 As for Dionysius [in 6.33], I grant that God’s existence is extraentrally without limit, that is to say, it is intensively infinite, so that its magnitude is infinity and it would still be such even if, to assume the impossible, God should suddenly cease to exist. What they add about him being “age of ages,” i.e., eternal or eternity, is certainly true, for it is repugnant to the sort of existence he has that he should ever cease to be, and the basis for this repugnance, viz., the existence, is there extraentrally. But the formal ground for repugnance to ceasing to be, whether it be the negation of any termination or the necessity of coexisting with any possible, adds to what is extraentrally only the negation of imperfection or some extraentrally conceptual relation. Neither does Dionysius say that “age of ages” is there extraentrally in the way his existing is, or in the way, following Augustine, we say that God is great, is wisdom, is good, etc. However, it is not necessary, because of this, that this or that attribute pertain to him without any negation or conceptual relation.\textsuperscript{27}

6.37 [Conclusion] As for this section of the first article, then, we know to what eternity pertains, namely, to existence. As for whether eternity represents something that is in God extraentrally, one can choose whatever opinion seems more probable to him.\textsuperscript{28} As for the unity required of eternity if it is to serve as a basis for equality, we need not add anything here to what was said before [6.29–30] about the unity of magnitude.

9) Third Question: Is power a real basis for equality?

[17] 6.38 As for the third point [in 6.11] about power, we can say that power implies in the main a relationship to the possible, and hence

\textsuperscript{26} John 5:26.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 1, d.8, nn.177ff. (v, 246ff.). In this and other places Scotus affirms that the attributes are formally distinct from each other and from the essence. See Glossary: “formal distinction.”

\textsuperscript{28} Cf. Duns Scotus, Ord. ii, d.2, q.2 (ed. Vivès xi, 246-67).
a conceptual relation, for God cannot have a real relation to anything distinct from himself, as we have proved elsewhere. Therefore, if power as power is taken to be its foundation, so far as this foundation goes, equality will not be there extramently.

6.39 But power may also be taken to mean something in God, perhaps the will, which allows one to assert this relation to the possible, for the principle behind all possible is something absolute. And if the will qua will is assumed to be there extramently (a point alluded to in [1.47 of] Question One), it follows that this foundation, which is real, is there extramently. However, the foundation for equality in power is not the will taken absolutely, but taken under the aspect of a power over extrinsic objects. According to the will, taken absolutely, Father and Son are equal only in virtue of the intrinsic magnitude of their will, but this is the first, not a third, basis for equality.

6.40 Therefore, insofar as the will serves as a third basis for equality of Father and Son, it is as principle or source of the possible, so that equality of power is always the equality of a principle qua principle. In the sense that Augustine in 6.7 intends to give three grounds for equality, therefore, power qua power or active causality is always part of the foundation, and since this represents a conceptual relation, the foundation assigned as a third basis of equality is not something that is there extramently.

[18] 6.41 [Objections and solutions] The objection is made, however, that a relation cannot have a relation as its basis; hence equality cannot be based on power. Proof of the first: If this were not so, there would be an infinite regress. Also there is that principle of Augustine: “Everything which is spoken of relatively is also something apart from the relationship.” It is necessary to trace it back to something absolute, and the relation must have its foundation in something absolute.

Perhaps one could claim the antecedent is not true, for Euclid gives this definition of proportionality: “Proportionality is a similarity between two proportions.” Now this similarity expresses what is formally a relation and it holds between a proportion and a proportion, which represent two similar foundations. But a proportion obviously implies a relationship.

29 Ibid., i, d.30 (vi, 169-202).
30 Augustine, De Trin. vii, c.1, n.2: PL 42, 934-35; CCSL 50, 247.
31 Euclid, Elementa v, d.6 (ii, 3).

6.42 Be that as it may, however, so far as our case is concerned, we can say that one conceptual relation may well have another conceptual relationship as its basis. Speaking of second intentions* [or concepts of concepts] it is true to say: “Genus is a species.” This intention “genus” is conceived as falling under a more universal intention, namely “universal,” and it is conceived as differing specifically from the intention “species” and the intention “difference,” and what comes under “genus” in this sense are only numerically distinct members, for the intention “genus” as found in “color” and in “animal” is only numerically different. Therefore, this intention “species” has its foundation in the intention “genus.” The reason this is possible in conceptual relations is that any relation of this sort can become the basis for a further conceptual relation in which the first notion is related to another. I can understand a conceptual relationship and compare it with another such relationship. Therefore, this second relation [i.e., the comparison] is based upon the first relation. A relationship of equality based on power, however, is only a conceptual relation, just as that aspect of the foundation that gives rise to it is also only a conceptual relation.

ARTICLE II
Are the Terms Related really Different?

[19] 6.43 [Three theses] As for the second principal article, I assert three points: First, that the terms related by equality in the divine are really distinct. Second, that this equality also requires a real distinction between them. Third, that this necessary requirement is not of just any sort, for instance, that of a concomitant condition, but this distinction is a prerequisite condition for the equality.

6.44 [The terms are really distinct] This first point is clearly the case, because it is one person who is said to be equal to another in virtue of this equality; the essence by contrast is never said to equal itself or to be equal to a person or vice versa. Now one person is really distinct from another.

6.45 [Equality requires a real distinction] The second point is proved by the authority of Hilary*: “Similarity does not obtain be-

32 Cf. Duns Scotus, Ord. ii, d.1, q.4, nn.3ff. (ed. Vivès xi, 96ff.); i, d.19, nn.15-17 and textus interpolatus (v, 271-79); d.31, nn.11-18 (vi, 207-11); iv, d.6, q.10, n.5 (ed. Vivès xvi, 620-21).
33 Ibid., i, d.19, nn.1-28 (v, 265-79); d.91 (vi, 208-22).
34 Hilary, De Trin. iii, n.25: PL 50, 92.
tween a thing and itself." Now if similarity did not require a distinction between the related terms, a thing could be similar to itself in the same way a thing can be identical with itself. For identity is self-reflexive and requires no distinction of terms. Augustine\textsuperscript{35} proves the same point when he declares that the first instance of equality is to be found in the Son. If equality did not require distinction, the Father could be equal to himself and, being prior to the Son in origin, he would represent the first instantiation of equality. But Augustine's statement is true, for equality in God only obtains between distinct persons and therefore it is present only when the Son is generated. Consequently the first equality is to be found in the Son as a term, viz., the equality by which the Father is equal to him, and also the first equality quasi-denominatively or relatively to a term that is somehow subsequent.

[20] 6.46 [Equality demands real distinction as a prior condition] The third point, viz., that the real distinction of terms is a prerequisite for equality, is proved from John\textsuperscript{36} who says: "He called his father God, making himself equal to God." This text supports the following demonstration. Christ said most truly that his Father was God; therefore, he made himself (i.e., he affirmed himself) to be God's equal. Now there is no perfect communication of nature unless that nature is given in full, and therefore it will not be imparted without equality being given as well. Proof that the communication or generation implied in the fact that the Son called his Father God is a prerequisite condition for equality. The order that obtains between two things conceptually distinct is the same as that which would hold if they were really distinct. We have frequently alluded to this principle [e.g., 1.59: 1.66; 4.59]. Now if the magnitude of the essence would be really distinct from the essence, the essence would be prior to magnitude, and hence its communication would be prior to that of the magnitude. Therefore, no matter what kind of distinction would exist between the essence and magnitude, essence would be communicated prior to magnitude and hence prior to equality, for this is present in the second extreme only because of the magnitude.

[21] 6.47 A second argument for the same is this: Plurality of the same type that is necessarily finite presupposes necessarily a plurality of a different kind by which it is limited to a certain number. This was explained in the solution to the second question [in 2.50].

\textsuperscript{35} Augustine, De Trin. vi, c.8, n.9: PL 45, 950; CCSL 50, 238.

\textsuperscript{36} John 5:18.
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6.55 [Second objection] Besides, a form of the same kind, according to the Metaphysics,\(^{38}\) is distinguished only by matter. Equality is only a form and, as the argument admits, it is the same kind of form in both, and there is no matter present. Therefore, one equality is not distinguished from the other. Not only is there no distinction in the foundation (as the first argument points out) but there is no distinction of opposed relations (according to this argument).

6.56 [Third objection] Third, the terms \textit{qua} terms are proved to lack the prerequisite distinction, for they are terms only in so far as they are terms of the relation and they are such only in so far as they have a foundation for equality. In so far as they have this foundation, however, they are not distinct.

6.57 [Fourth objection] Fourth and finally, what pertains to the divine persons according to substance is not distinguished in them. As Augustine says\(^{39}\), "In what respect is the Son equal to the Father? Certainly not in what is said relatively with reference to the Father; therefore, it remains the Son is equal in what is said with reference to himself." And he infers that equality is there according to substance. Therefore, we have the minor we want.

6.58 Of these four reasons, the third confirms the first and the fourth confirms the second. Still they can be treated as distinct arguments.

[24]

6.59 [Answer to the first objection] The first argument [in 6.54] seems to be the basis for the opinion of one [Doctor]\(^{40}\); therefore, we begin by challenging what he takes as the foundation of the argument, viz., that real equality requires distinct and commensurate magnitudes.

First of all, relations based on some foundation \textit{qua} one require no greater distinction in it than relations based on something but not \textit{qua} one, and we are referring in both cases to real relations. Now the relationships of origin are not based on the divine essence \textit{qua} one, so that unity is not the proximate reason for founding such relationships. The common relations, on the other hand, are based on this foundation \textit{qua} one. To be real, then, the common relations need no greater distinction in the foundation than do the relations of origin. But all admit the latter require no distinction [in the essence]; therefore, neither do the common relations.

\(^{38}\) Aristotle, \textit{Metaph.} xii, c.8 (1074a32-36).

\(^{39}\) Augustine, \textit{De Trin.} v, c.7: PL 42, 815; CCSL 50, 212.

\(^{40}\) Henry of Ghent, \textit{Quodl.} i, q.1 (fol. 1A-B); \textit{Summa} a.63, q.2 in corp. (ii, fol. 196B-197E).

\(^{37}\) Thomas, \textit{Summa theol.} i, q.48, a.4, ad 4 (i, 155): q.42, a.1 in corp., and ad 4 (i, 212).
6.60 Furthermore, the essence in itself, and not as considered twice by the mind, constitutes the basis for the different relationships of origin. And the reason seems to be that both as a fecund communicative principle and as the communicable term it is formally infinite. But the essence, in terms of the degree of greatness virtually present, is formally infinite, indeed, it is infinite quantity. By the same token, then, insofar as it has this degree of greatness in itself, and not only because the mind considers it twice, the essence can be the basis for common relations between opposite persons that are also real.

6.61 Furthermore, there is the point added [in 6.54] about distinct commensurate quantities. Now I ask: How are we to understand his claim that real equality can exist only between magnitudes that are commensurate in this way? Does their being commensurate refer to the formal reason for the equality or does it indicate some prior fundamental aspect? If it means the first, there is an obvious begging to argue there is no real commensuration, therefore there is no real equality. If it means the second, it does not seem probable that the commensuration in the foundation is presupposed by equality. Indeed, actual commensuration seems subsequent to equality, for it seems to imply bringing two equals together and coextending them, and presupposes they have some mode of extension or quantity that they can be coextended and brought together for purposes of measurement.

6.62 That is why the body of Christ in the Eucharist is not measured by anything having quantity; neither is it in proximate potency to be measured by anything its equal so long as it exists in the way it does in the Eucharist. Therefore, there is no argument that allows one to infer from “There is no real commensuration,” as somehow prior, to “There is no real equality.”

6.63 Consequently, to the argument [in 6.54] I make this reply: If there were two magnitudes neither of which exceeded the other, even apart from the notion of quantity that serves as the basis for their equality they would have some unity (but in a diminished and qualified sense). But when two supposita* have the same magnitude numerically, then along with the distinction of terms there is unity in a simple or unqualified sense. There is simply a distinction of terms, then, and simply a unity of form according to which they are interrelated. Therefore, we have what is required for a common relation even more truly than would be the case if the unity of form in the terms were one only in a qualified sense. For what a common

6.64 [Answer to the second objection] To the second argument [in 6.55], I say that the way to understand the major proposition [viz., a form of the same kind is distinguished only by matter] was explained in Question Two [2.5, 2.59] in expounding the mind of the Philosopher. Matter there does not refer to matter as the recipient of form, but it refers to anything that is a prerequisite for a form such that its plurality determines how many forms there will be. And in this sense, equality has “mater,” for the plurality of equality necessarily presupposes plurality of another sort which determines its number. This is clear from the third conclusion of this article [cf. 6.46], which was that equality requires the relationships of origin.

6.65 [Answer to the third objection] To the third argument [in 6.56], one can understand the claim that “the terms qua terms are the terms” in different ways. Either the relative, which is called the opposite or correlative, is reduplicated*; or it is the ultimate formal reason by which it is in the last analysis formally a correlative or relative that is reduplicated, or it might be some other formal reason that is reduplicated which is not ultimate but is still fundamental or a prerequisite. In the first and second sense, the major is true, namely, that a term insofar as it is a term must be really distinguished from the other term. In the third sense, however, the major is false, but it is only in this third sense that the minor is true. Hence the proof, which accepts the principle that the term qua term acts as the term of the relation, would require that “qua term” be distinguished as before, and only in the third sense does it function as term, for it does so insofar as it has the foundation for the relation in itself.

11 Aristotle, Metaph. xii, c.8 (1074a34-36).
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6.66 [Answer to the fourth objection] To the fourth argument [in 6.57], I say that the prepositional phrase “according to” viewed in relationship to the predicate does not always indicate that the term dependent on the preposition expresses the ultimate formal reason for the inherence of the predicate in the subject; more frequently or, at least, commonly, it indicates only that it is a fundamental reason. I say, for example, that Socrates is similar to Plato according to whiteness, even though it is not whiteness, but his similarity, that is the formal proximate reason why he is similar to Plato, just as whiteness is the ultimate formal reason he is white. To the extent that whiteness is still a fundamental reason for similarity, I say that Augustine, in the text cited, had in mind that the Son is equal to the Father according to substance, because paternity and filiation are not properly speaking fundamental reasons for equality, but that this must be something absolute and common to both. Therefore, when the major is taken as saying that whatever is predicated of the persons according to substance is not numbered [or distinguished] in them, this is true insofar as “according to” designates the proximate formal reason, but then the minor is false and does not express the mind of Augustine, for when he understands equality to be there “according to substance,” what follows the preposition gives at most a fundamental reason for equality being there.

[28] 6.67 You may object: Why then is the Father not called Father according to substance, since substance is a fundamental reason for paternity and is so more immediately than it is a fundamental reason for equality, according to you?

One could say that when equality is said to be there “according to substance,” substance or essence is taken insofar as it is one. There is indeed one existing essence that is the foundation for both relationships [viz., of equality and origin], but it is not the foundation for both as one. It is as one that it is the foundation for equality in all three persons. However, this essence, which is one, is also the foundation for paternity or filiation, but not as one thing found in all three. It is rather as a secund principle and as a communicable term that the essence represents a quasi-proximate foundation for both paternity and filiation.

6.68 Another possible answer would be to say that, logically speaking, nothing is truly said to pertain to anything “according to A” if A is a transcendent [i.e., an inadequate] reason, and this whether a formal or fundamental reason. Hence “Socrates according to color is white” would be false, whereas “Socrates according
to whiteness is white” would be true. Now the essence is a fundamental reason for paternity, but it is a transcendent reason, whereas it is a non-transcendent and adequate fundamental reason as regards equality. Therefore, according to logic, Augustine said properly that this is true: “In some way the Father according to essence is equal” in a way that “According to essence he is Father” is not true. On the contrary, “According to memory he is Father” is the truth of the matter, because memory is a fundamental reason that is adequate to this relationship.

[29] 6.69 [Objection to the proof for the third conclusion in 6.46ff.] A second aspect challenged concerns what was said in article two about the prerequisite condition.

For equality, it is said, is not some real relationship distinct from the personal relations, but its concept includes these relations as well as the unity of the essence. This is inferred as follows: In the divine there is nothing to be considered except the essence and the real relations, which introduce distinction. Now the same thing is not referred to itself nor is one relation referred to a second relation by means of a third relation, for when paternity is said to be in relative opposition to filiation, this opposition is not some intermediate relation between paternity and filiation, for in this way relations would be multiplied ad infinitum. Therefore, equality implies both the distinction of persons and the unity of essence, because what makes the persons equal is their having the same one magnitude. The concept of equality, therefore, includes both the distinguishing relationships and the unity of the essence.

6.70 [Answer to the objection] If “includes” in the above argument is taken to mean “includes per se,” and not just “includes quasi-materially” or “includes as a prerequisite condition,” then the argument seems to be false, for the following reasons.

First, essence and relation do not constitute a concept that is one per se, for no single concept is both per se absolute and per se relative. Equality, however, seems to be a concept that is one per se.

6.71 Furthermore, what includes per se elements of different kinds does not retain the same per se meaning. But equality seems to have one per se meaning for both Father and Son; therefore, it does not include per se the relationships of origin these persons possess, because they are of different kinds.

[30] 6.72 Therefore, I say that equality fundamentally implies the es-

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42 Thomas, Summa theol. 1, q.42, a.1, ad 4 (1, 212).
43 Cf. Duns Scotus, Ord. 1, d.13, nn.77ff. (v, 105ff.).
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sence, but requires the personal relations as presuppositions. But
equality per se implies neither the essence nor the relations, but a
relationship and one that is different in kind from the relations of
origin. A remote foundation for the relationship of equality is the
proximate foundation for the other relation. The persons constitu-
ted by the relationships of origin are interrelated by this common
relationship.

6.73 On this basis then I reply to the argument. I readily grant
that the essence is not referred to itself or paternity put in relative
opposition to filiation by means of equality. But it does not follow
from this that paternity is not another relation than equality. In
point of fact, it is the Father having both paternity and the divine
essence who is related to the Son by equality. Neither is there any
probability in this implication: “Equality is a relation other than
those of origin, therefore, according to equality, either the same
thing is referred to itself or a relation is referred to an opposing
relation.” What is more, not even through paternity is the same thing
referred to itself, nor is one relation referred to its opposite. What
is referred is one relative to its opposed correlate. And so it is in
the instance at hand, except that in the case of origin the relative is
constituted primarily by the relationship relating it to its correlate,
whereas in the case of equality the relative is only denominated
[or called “equal”] by virtue of the relationship which relates it [to
the other persons] as it were extrinsically [to what constitutes it].

ARTICLE III

Is Equality in the Persons according to an
Extramental Foundation?

[31] 6.74 [The answer is affirmative] As for the third article, I say that
the relation of equality present in these extremes is there according
to a foundation that is in them extrametally. I prove this by two
texts from the Gospels, two texts from Augustine, and two argu-
ments from reason.

6.75 The first text is the one from John cited earlier [in 6.46]: “He
called his father God, making himself equal to God.” For with the
same necessity and reality that the Father generated a Son, he also
generated someone equal to himself. As Augustine puts it: “If we
should want to say that the Father is greater than the Son because

44 Ibid., d.19, n.13 (v, 270); d.31, n.11 (vi, 207-208).
45 John 5:18.
46 Augustine, Contra Maxim. I, c.5: PL 42, 748; II, c.18, n.3 (col. 786).
47 Chrysostom, In Ioannem homiliae 59, n.3: PG 59, 223f.
48 John 10:29.
49 Augustine, Trin. xv, c.14, n.23: PL 42, 1076; CCSL 50a, 496.
51 Augustine, In Ioannis Evangelium tractatus xvii, n.16: PL 35, 1535:
CCSL 86, 178.

he begot whereas the Son did not, I will immediately counter. In-
deed the Father is not greater than the Son because he begot a Son
that is his equal.” Even the Jews, blind though they were, under-
stood this, as Chrysostom explains, because when Christ called
himself the Son of the Father, they understood him to be saying by
this that he was the equal of God.

6.76 A second text from the Gospel and another from Augustine
proves the same. “What my Father has given me is greater than all.”
Commenting on these words of John, Augustine says: “The Father
begot the Word, equal in all things to himself, for he would
not have uttered himself completely and perfectly, if there were
anything less or more in his Word than in himself.” This leads to the
following argument. The most perfect communication must involve
the most perfect term communicable and with the highest possi-
ble magnitude, so that the produced is the complete equal of the
producer. Therefore, if the communication in the divine generation
is of necessity most perfect in reality or extrametally, since a most
perfect term is communicable in its fullest magnitude, by which—as
Chris says—something greater than all things is given to the Son,
then he has been given in reality and extrametally equality with
the Father, who has the same essence and in the same measure.

[32] 6.77 A third text from Scripture supports this interpretation:
“He thought it not robbery to be equal to God.” Augustine agrees
with this in his comment on this “making himself equal to God”:
“He did not make himself equal to God, but the Father had begot-
ten him equal.” What Augustine wishes to say is that the Son did
not make himself equal to God by stealing or usurping equality, but
made himself, i.e., asserted himself to be, equal because he was born
of God. That is why Augustine adds in the same work: “Christ was
born equal to the Father; hence the Apostle exalts him by saying:
‘Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal
to God.’ What does ‘he thought it not robbery’ mean but that he did
not consider being equal to God a usurpation, but rather that with
which he was born.” Hence he had prefaced these words with the
remark: “Notice that the Jews understood what the Arians, who

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claim the Son is unequal to the Father, have not grasped. Not that the Jews thought the Father to be equal to the Son, but they did understand that by such words the Son had declared himself the equal of the Father."

6.78 From all these citations from Scripture and Augustine we seem left with this conclusion: Just as by natural generation the same nature and magnitude of substance has been communicated to the Son, so too has equality been imparted to him.

6.79 [Two proofs from reason] The first reason in proof of this conclusion is the following. If the magnitude of the Father were other than that of the Son, as the Arians claim, then the Son would be less than the Father by a real relationship of inferiority and not just a conceptual one, for relations of the first type based on different degrees of greatness are real. By the same or even greater right will the equality be real if the same degree of greatness is communicated.

6.80 A second reason, which is a kind of confirmation of the first, is this: It hardly seems probable that, of two opposites, the imperfect would be present in things extramentially whereas the perfect could not be there extramentially. Now equality is the perfect opposite and inequality its imperfect opposite, according to Augustine:

"You value equality above inequality as I believe everyone with human sensitivity would," he says to his disciple. Now the inequalities among things are perfect in the sense that the superiority or inferiority is something real and extrametal; therefore, it would seem unreasonable that perfect equality as something real and extrametal should not also exist in things. But it is only perfect in the divine persons for in no other place is the magnitude perfect.

6.81 One could argue the same way about identity and diversity, because identity is the more perfect of these terms or opposites. According to many, however, some diversity among things is perfect in the sense of being a real relation; therefore some identity is perfect in the sense of being a real relation. Never is it so perfect, however, as found in the divine persons. For a person's identity with himself is not a real relation, nor is the identity of one creature with another perfect, since they can only be "one" in a qualified sense.

6.82 [General conclusion] From what is said in these three articles, the solution to our question follows. If, according to the common opinion, a real relation requires only these three conditions: (i) that the foundation be real, viz., something extrametal in a

52 Augustine, De quantitate animae, c.9, n.15: PL 32, 1044.
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as existing, whereas if they are thought of by prescinding or abstracting from existence, the equality is a consequence of what they are in concept.

As for the form of the argument I say: The major, which takes a relation not to be real if it pertains to extremes having only conceptual being, can be admitted if it means the relation would pertain to them only if they had conceptual existence. But then the minor is false, for equality pertains to the persons not only insofar as they have conceptual existence, but also insofar as they have real being, and therefore equality is there in reality.

Question Seven

CAN IT BE DEMONSTRATED BY NATURAL AND NECESSARY REASON THAT GOD IS OMNIPOTENT?

1 7.1 So far we have investigated what pertains to God internally and in particular the relationships of person to person [QQ. 1-6]. Now it remains to study what pertains to God considered externally, i.e., properties that imply a relationship of God to creatures. Here two sorts of questions could arise, one about the subject of the relation [QQ. 7-8], the other about the term or object to which it relates [QQ. 9-11].

7.2 Two questions were raised about the subject, one general, the other particular. The first question is this: Can it be demonstrated by natural and necessary reason that God in general, and not just one particular person, is omnipotent?1 The second question pertains to one person in particular: Has the Son or Word of God some causality of his own as regards the creature? Consider the first of these.

Arguments Pro and Con

7.3 First, the argument for the affirmative.

"God is omnipotent" seems demonstrable by natural reason, since natural reason can demonstrate that God has infinite power and, therefore, is omnipotent. Proof of the antecedent: The Philosopher2 proves that God has infinite power from the fact that he produces motion over an infinite span of time. Proof of the implication: No power could be greater than the infinite. One could not even think of anything greater. If a power could be surpassed, it would not be infinite. But every power which is not omnipotence could be thought of as surpassed by a power which is omnipotence.

2 7.4 Arguments to the contrary:

If it can be demonstrated that God is omnipotent, it can also be demonstrated that God can generate the Son. The consequent is

1 Cf. Duns Scotus, Ord. 1, d.42 (vi, 341-49); d.2, nn.111ff. (v, 188ff.).
2 Aristotle, Physic. viii, c.5 (256a12-256b2); Metaph. xii, c.6 (1071-22).