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Excerpts from the *Scriptum in Metaphysicam Aristotelis* 9 (Theta)

Line numbers in the Latin edition precede each paragraph*

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SMet 9.1.Q1

[130-133] **9.1.Q1A** But now we can ask about the unity of definition. But in the first place we shall inquire about Aristotle's statement that the genus and the differentia are one in act and two in potential. For if this were not so, something truly one would not be [made] from them.

[134] But it seems that this is false in the following way:

[135-145] Suppose that a genus and a differentia are one in act, and that there are two differentiae, *A* and *B*, dividing some genus. Therefore, the genus and *A* are one in act, and similarly the genus and *B*. For the genus appears separately with each differentia in the definitions of opposite species. But "whatever things are the same as one and the same thing are the same as each other."¹ Therefore, whatever things are the same as one and the same thing in act are the same as each other in act. *A* and *B* are the same as the genus in act; therefore, they are the same as each other in act. Therefore, opposite species are one and the same in act. Therefore, all things that fall under the same genus are one and the same in essence.

* Unpublished critical edition of Rufus' *Scriptum in Metaphysicam Aristotelis* by Rega Wood, Neil Lewis and Jennifer Ottman (January 16, 2015). English quotations of Aristotle's texts are translations from their Latin versions listed in the bibliography. In the case of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, I use the *Arabica-Latina* which Rufus expounded. Greek texts, according to the modern editions listed in the bibliography, are included in order to facilitate comparison with their Latin translations.

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¹ Euclid, *Elementa geometriae, communis animae conceptio* 1, probably cited from a lost translation of Boethius, cf. Boethius, *In Sophisticae elencha*: "We show that things that are the same as one and the same thing are also the same as each other." // "*quae uni et eidem sunt eadem, et sibi invicem probamus esse eadem*" (AL 6.1-3: 16-17; PL 64: 1015A). About this translation cf. H. Busard, *Campanus of Novara and Euclid's Elements*, Stuttgart 2005, pp. 1-2.

[146-148] **9.1.Q1B** Next, Aristotle posits that act and potential do not distinguish² essence, and this because according to him the same thing is first in potential and secondly in act.³

[149-153] But this seems false, for if this were so, then the genus and the differentia would be one in essence, since they are one in act as he says. And if so, then two opposite differentiae would be one in essence. Therefore, everything in one category would be one in essence.

[154-159] Next, if act and potential do not distinguish essence, [and if] prime matter is in potential to the form of air, then they are one in essence, and similarly prime matter and the form of fire. Therefore, the form of air and the form of fire do not distinguish essence, and similarly neither man and ass nor any other things [would differ in essence]. Therefore, all things are one in essence.

[160-164] **9.1.Q1C** Subsequently let us ask what is meant by “the differentiae are potentially in the genus”;⁴ for every potential is otiose unless reduced to act. Therefore, if they are potentially in the genus, at some point they will be actually in it. Therefore, how are they actually in it, and how potentially? There is a question about this.

² Here I translate *diversus* and its cognates as ‘distinct’ and its cognates. It is important to note the contrast between *diversus* and *differens* as Rufus explains it in *SMet* 10.4.E4:

“Subsequently [Aristotle] posits another such difference: ‘distinct’ (*diversum*) is superior in relation to ‘different’ (*differens*), and different [is] inferior. Therefore they differ from one another as ‘superior’ and ‘inferior’. He proves that ‘distinct’ is superior in this way: ‘the same’ (*idem*) and ‘distinct’ pertain to every entity. Hence, any entity whatsoever can be said [to be] either distinct from or the same as another [entity], since the two most general genera are said [to be] distinct. However, ‘different’ and ‘agreeing’ (*conveniens*) only pertain to things belonging to the same genus, since it [is not the case that] any entity is different from any [other] entity whatsoever. For the two most general genera are not said to be different from one another. And from this [Aristotle] concludes that, if ‘different’ and ‘agreeing’ are only said of things belonging to the same genus, therefore, if something differs from another thing, it differs from it in some respect, and in another respect it does not differ but agrees with it. From this it is evident that whatever things differ agree either in the most specific species or in the subalternate genus or in the most general genus. Therefore, a man does not differ (*differt*) from a statue but is distinct (*diversatur*) [from it].” // “Consequenter ponit aliam differentiam talem: *Diversum est superius ad differens, et differens inferius. Differunt igitur ab invicem sicut superius et inferius. Quod diversum sit superius, hoc probat sic: Idem et diversum circueunt omne ens. Unde quodlibet ens potest dici aut diversum aut idem cum alio; duo enim genera generalissima dicuntur diversa. Differens autem et conveniens non circueunt nisi res eiusdem generis; non enim quodlibet ens a quolibet ente est differens. Duo enim genera generalissima non dicuntur esse differentia ab invicem. Et ex hoc concludit quod si differens et conveniens non dicuntur nisi de rebus eiusdem generis, quod ergo si aliquid differt ab alio, per aliquid differt ab eo, et per aliquid non differt sed convenit ei. Ex hoc patet quod quaecumque differunt aut conveniunt in specie specialissima aut in genere subalterno aut in genere generalissimo. Homo igitur a figura non differt sed diversatur.*”

³ Cf. *Metaph.* 1045a30-33.

⁴ Cf. Porphyrius, *Isag.* (tr. Boethius, AL 1.6-7: 23): “The broader genus contains the differentia in potential; indeed, in the case of animal, one is rational, another irrational.” // “*Amplius genus continet differentiam potestate; animalis enim hoc quidem rationale est, illud vero irracionale.*”

[165-168] **9.1.Q1D** Next, let us ask what the proposition “the same thing and not another is first in potency and then in act” contributes to the solution to the question which Aristotle proposes about the unity of a composite natural substance.

[169] And it seems that it [contributes] nothing and is false.

[170-175] For let us suppose that fire is generated here from air. According to [Aristotle], the same thing that previously was potentially fire is now [actually] fire. Let us ask what that is: either air or the matter of air or something else. If air, then air is fire, which is false. If the matter of air, then the matter of air is fire. If something else—but there is nothing else in air except the accidents of air; therefore, they are fire.

[176-177] **9.1.Q1E** Next, Aristotle says that ultimate matter and form are the same and one.

[178] But this seems to be false:

[179-190] For if so, everything will be one and the same. Proof: when he says “ultimate matter and form are one and the same”⁵ he means proximate matter. Moreover, the most basic matter is the proximate matter of the form of the most general genus, and this matter is shared by all caused things. Therefore, suppose we call this prime matter *A*, and the form of the most general genus *B*. *A* and *B* are one and the same in essence. But *A* and *B* are proximate matter of some later form. Let that form be *C*. Therefore, *A*, *B*, and *C* are one in essence. Similarly, *A* and *B* are proximate matter with respect to another form. Let that form be *D*. Therefore, *A*, *B*, and *D* are one in essence. Therefore, *C* and *D* are one in essence. Moreover, by proceeding in this way it follows that everything is one in essence.

[191-197] The same absurdity follows if we say that the form and the proximate matter of any caused thing are one and the same in essence, namely if we analyze⁶ this matter into other matters up to universal prime matter, and if we suppose that this form is in potential with respect to other forms in order. And even if it is not in potential with respect to later forms, the same absurdity follows.

[198-200] **9.1.Q1F** Subsequently we can ask why Aristotle works so hard to solve the question about the unity of a composite natural substance.

⁵ *Metaph.* 1045b18-19: “*materia ultima et forma est idem et unum*” (*Arabica-Latina*) // “ἡ ἐσχάτη ὕλη καὶ ἡ μορφή ταὐτὸ καὶ ἓν” (ed. Ross) // “ultimate matter and form are one and the same thing.”

⁶ The Latin verb here is *resolvo* (‘resolve’), which in the *Arabica-Latina* translates Aristotle’s ἀναλύω in *Metaph.* 1044a24. The complete passage is: “διχῶς γὰρ τόδ’ ἐκ τοῦδε, ἢ ὅτι πρὸ ὁδοῦ ἔσται ἢ ὅτι ἀναλυθέντος εἰς τὴν ἀρχήν” (*Meta.* 1044a23-25) // “*duobus enim modis erit hoc ex hoc, aut ut praecedat ad ipsum, aut ut resolvatur et veniat ad primum principium*” (*Arabica-Latina*) // “For one thing will come to be from another in two ways, either because [the latter] precedes [the former], or because [the former] is analysed and comes into its first principle.” Notice that one of the meanings of *resolve* in the Oxford English Dictionary is “to reduce something by analysis into another thing.”

[201-204] For it seems that he labors in vain, since he needs say nothing other than that this matter is proper with respect to this form and the converse, and therefore one thing is [made] from them in act. And if matter were not proper with respect to form, one thing would not be made from them in act.

[205-211] But someone who solves [the problem] in this way does not solve it fully, since even though he says this, we can still ask him whether or not matter and form are distinct natures in act. If not, Aristotle has what he proposed to show, since he labors to prove this (as it seems). If they are two in act, then something truly one is never made from them, since one thing in act is not made from two things in act, but from two things in potential. And therefore the twofold (*duplex*) is two in potential and one in act.

[212-216] Next, something truly one is never made from two things in act; from matter and form something truly one is made; therefore, matter and form exist as twofold. Therefore, they coincide at their root; therefore, they are one in essence. And if they are not twofold, then they are two; therefore, they are distinct in act; therefore, something one is never made from them.

[217-218] Next, Aristotle says that matter and form are one in act, and therefore something truly one in act is made from them.

[219-225] **9.1.Q1G** Let us ask what he means when he says: “matter and form are one”. Does he mean nothing more than that matter and form are one composite? If nothing more, then he begs the question. Proof: to be one from matter and form is prior to them being that one thing, if there is order among them. And if there is no order, they are simultaneous by nature. Therefore, their being some one composite is not the reason why something one is made from them. And he gives this as the reason, and therefore he begs the question.

[227-235] Next, if from some things something truly one is made, since they are one composite, then from substance and accident something truly one is made, since they are some one aggregate. Therefore, when Aristotle says ‘matter and form are one’ he means more than ‘one composite’. Therefore, this ‘one’ stands for something prior to the composite in which matter and form share before that one composite is made from them. Therefore, he means that matter and form exist naturally as twofold; therefore, they are joined at their root according to him; therefore, they are one in essence, which is impossible.

SMet 9.2.Q1

[375-376] But now let us ask whether matter and form are one in essence or not.

[377] And it seems they are:

[378-385] A universal is a form; the common [quality] predicated of many things is a universal; therefore, it is a form. Now, substance is a predicate common to matter and form; therefore, substance is form. Moreover, predicating substance of matter is essential predication and not accidental. But in essential predication there is no essential predicate other than the subject. Now, that predicate is form, and the subject is matter; therefore, matter and form are the same in essence.

[386-388] Next, something is predicated of matter. Not matter, since it is not predicated of anything; therefore, form. Therefore, matter is form; therefore, they are one in essence.

[389-392] Next, matter is substance; moreover, ‘substance’ signifies a common quality since it is an appellative⁷ name and it is predicated of matter; therefore, [either] matter is form or the proposition ‘matter is substance’ is false.

[393-398] In reply to this we must say that this does not follow: ‘matter is substance, and substance is form, therefore matter is form’. For the sense of the proposition ‘matter is substance’ is ‘matter is disposed by the form of substance’, since form is only predicated as being and act, and so it is predicated in an oblique case.⁸ And this response suffices in reply to these three arguments.

[399] But now we can show the same [point] with other arguments as follows:

[400-403] [1] Things that belong to one genus participate in one nature; matter and form belong to one genus, since each one is a substance; therefore, they share the same nature; therefore, the same essence. But they are simple; therefore, they are one in essence.

[404-407] [2] Next, only act divides;⁹ therefore, things that differ are either act or have act; therefore, if matter differs from the essence of form, it is either act or has act. But it neither has act nor is act. Therefore, it does not differ from the essence of form.

[408-412] [3] Next, act and potential do not distinguish essence, since one and the same thing is first in potential and then in act. Therefore, once we circumscribe [potential and act] from matter and form, since there is no other difference [between them], the essence

⁷ For Rufus, as for Anselm, the verb *appello* means ‘to refer’ (here we have the cognate *appellativus*). According to Ebbesen (2009, p. 2), “Anselm’s specialized use of *appellare* has no clear model in earlier texts, as far as I am informed. It certainly is not ancient, though one can surely find passages in ancient books that may have provided inspiration for Anselm or whoever invented the terminology. *Appellare* in the sense of ‘refer to’ stayed in use at least till the late twelfth century; frequently also its synonym *nominare* was used, and sometimes another synonym, *nuncupare*. But gradually another term encroached upon the territory of *appellare*; it was *supponere* (*pro*) and by the end of the century *suppositio* had become the standard word for ‘reference of a substantive noun’, *appellare* having become more specialized, meaning now ‘refer to objects existing in the present time’.”

⁸ In the example ‘matter is disposed by the form of substance’, the word *forma* in Latin is in the ablative (‘by the form’), one of the oblique cases.

⁹ *Metaph.* 1039a7. Here *actus*, ‘act’, translates the Greek ἐντελέχεια, often rendered into English as ‘actualization’.

of matter and form can be the same; and “among eternal things what is does not differ from what can be”,¹⁰ therefore, they are one in essence.

[413-424] [4] Next, every kind of naming or intellectual cognition is in virtue of a disposition (*habitus*) and its privation. Now, in no kind of naming or intellectual cognition the form itself (*res formae*)¹¹ is separated from matter, but only the account of actuality [is separated from matter]. Therefore, once we circumscribe this being that is actuality from form, matter and form remain the same in reality or essence; therefore, they are one in essence. The minor premise of this argument is proved through the major of the same [argument] in the following way: when matter is named, it is named either in virtue of its disposition or its privation. If in virtue of its disposition, then in virtue of form; therefore, in this [respect] the form itself is not separated from matter. If in virtue of privation—but privation is not pure negation; therefore, form itself is not denied here, but only act; therefore, in this [respect] the form itself is not distinguished from matter.

[425-434] [5] Next, act and potential are the first contraries in any genus; therefore, in the genus of substance. “But contraries are designed (*nata sunt*) to be produced in the same subject,”¹² and this subject, considered in itself, does not determine either of them. Therefore, these two contraries have one subject that does not determine either; therefore, there will be one common essence in which matter and form participate. But this essence is not form, since form determines act, and this common [essence] does not determine any act. It is not matter, since [matter] determines potential. Therefore, there must be one essence common to both, which bears both of the contraries.

[435-442] [6] Next, potential and essence are understood in matter, and essence and act in form. Suppose we circumscribe in thought potential from matter and act from form. Now, what remains is either an essence and an essence, or only one. If only one, then the aforementioned conclusion follows. On the contrary, if an essence and an essence, there is nothing that distinguishes this essence from that one. Act does not, since it is circumscribed, and only act divides; therefore, they are one in essence.

¹⁰ Aristot., *Phys.* 3.3.203b30: “ἐνδέχεσθαι γὰρ ἢ εἶναι οὐδὲν διαφέρει ἐν τοῖς αἰδίτοις” // “*in perpetuis non differt esse a posse.*” // “in [the case of] perpetual things, ‘to be’ does not differ from ‘to be possible’.”

¹¹ We find this use of *res generis* also in *Johannis Pechami Quaestiones tractantes de anima*, ed. P.H. Spettmann, O.F.M., Monasterii Westfolorum (Aschendorff, 1918), p. 187: “*Praeterea cum genus substantiae dividatur per spirituales et corporales substantias et de ipsis univoce praedicetur, cum in omnibus, quae secundum rectam lineam sunt in genere, sit res generis cum aliquo addito, si genus est compositum ex primis principiis, scilicet materia et forma, ut dicit Boethius, Super Praedicamenta, manifesta est omnem substantiam, quae est in genere, esse compositam et materia et forma.*” // “Besides, since the genus of substance is divided into spiritual and corporeal substances and it is predicated univocally of them, since in all things that are in the genus in a direct line there is the **genus itself** with something added, if the genus is composed of first principles, namely matter and form, as Boethius says in *Super Praedicamenta*, it is manifest that every substance that is in the genus is composed of matter and form.”

¹² Aristotle, *De somno* 453b27-29: “For contraries, in natural and other things, are always seen to be received in the same [subject], and to be passions of the same [subject].” // “*nam extrema semper in aliis et in naturalibus circa idem susceptibile videntur fieri et eiusdem esse passiones*” (trans. uetus). // “ἀεὶ γὰρ τὰ ἐναντία καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ ἐν τοῖς φυσικοῖς ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ δεκτικῷ φαίνεται γιγνόμενα, καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὄντα πάθη [...]” (ed. Ross).

[443-444] On the contrary: if so, then everything is one; this consequence was proved earlier.¹³

[445-448] [7] Next, Aristotle says in the second book of the *Physics* that there are four causes and that three of them coincide as one, the agent, the end and the form; and not the fourth. Therefore, matter and form do not coincide as one thing. Therefore, they are not one in essence.

[449-460] In reply to the argument [3, 6] about the circumscription of potential from matter and act from form, someone will reply in this way, [saying] that potential cannot be circumscribed from matter, since however much someone removes potential from the essence of matter, so much the more is matter itself in potential. For suppose that some potential is circumscribed from prime matter.¹⁴ Call that potential *A*. [Prime matter] lacks *A* and also act, and it can have *A*. Therefore, it is now more in potential than when it had *A*. For it is now in potential to *A* and to act, and before it was only in potential to act—namely, when it had *A*. And just as it is the case for potential with respect to matter, so similarly it is the case for act with respect to form. Hence, potential cannot be separated from matter nor act from form.

[461] But on the contrary:

[462-475] In matter there is both the essence of matter and its passive potential. Moreover, its passive potential is not its essence. Similarly in form there is both essence and active potential, and active potential is not the essence of form. Therefore, if the potential of matter is not the essence of matter, then neither is the potential of form the essence of form. Therefore, I can talk about the potential of matter without its essence, and about the potential of form without the essence of form. But if I can say this, I can signify the former without the latter. Therefore, it is possible to understand the essence of matter without understanding its potential, and similarly the essence of form without understanding its potential. Therefore, if it is possible to understand one without the other, then [it is possible] to circumscribe, since it is possible for one to be circumscribed [in thought] from the other, although it is not possible for one to exist without the other. Therefore, let us circumscribe, and we reach the same conclusion as before.¹⁵

[476-482] Next, suppose *per impossibile* that were no potential in matter or act in form. Therefore, we can ask whether there is an essence and an essence or only one. There would not be an essence and an essence, since what divides would not exist. Therefore, if act and potential do not distinguish essence, whether or not potential is in matter and act in form, there will not be an essence and an essence. Therefore, matter and form will be one in essence.

¹³ See above, 9.1.Q1D.

¹⁴ Following the suggestion of the editors, this translation corresponds to: “*Ponamus quod aliqua potentia circumscribatur a materia prima*” instead of: “*Ponamus enim quod materia prima circumscribatur ab aliqua potentia*”. The latter is the MSS reading.

¹⁵ That they are one *per essentiam*, as in lines 435-442.

[483-488] To the first question [9.1.Q1A] we must reply in the following way, namely that the cause of the unity of definition is that genus and differentia are one in act and two in potential; hence, they are twofold and not two. Therefore, genus and differentia coincide at their root and are one essentially. And I mean the differentia that is really the form and is produced in being by the process of generation.

[489-492] In the same way we must say that a natural composite is truly one, and the cause of its unity is that ultimate matter and form are one in act and two in potential; hence, they are twofold and not two.

[493-500] Moreover, we must know that the ultimate matter of a natural thing is the matter that is the necessity¹⁶ to which no addition is possible, since such matter lacks only actuality, and that actuality does not add essence; moreover, it receives that actuality in an instant. Hence, the essence of the form is not added, but only its actuality, and that actuality is the ultimate degree (*ultimitas*) of active potential, and this is the endpoint and complement¹⁷ of species or form. Therefore, ultimate matter, as it has already been argued, is not other than form in essence.

[501-522] And in order to explain this better let us give the following example: suppose that fire is generated from air. The form of fire which is induced in the matter of air does not come from the outside but from the inside, since the intention of the genus of the form of fire (*intentio generis formae ignis*),¹⁸ or rather the individual of that genus, is in

¹⁶ ‘The matter that is the necessity’ (*materia quae est necessitas*) means ‘the matter in proximate potential’ as this paragraph explains. See also *SMet* 7.5.Q6C.

¹⁷ Cf. Arist. *Metaph.* 1050a22-23. When a distinction between ἐνέργεια and ἐντελέχεια is needed, the *Arabica-Latina* uses *actus* and *complementum*, respectively. However, *actus* sometimes translates ἐντελέχεια (e.g. *Metaph.* 1047a30-31).

¹⁸ By means of a similar example in *MMet* 7.9, Rufus spells out what he means by the ‘intention of the genus’ (*intentio generis*):

“[...] the form of this air is potentially in the matter of this fire. [The matter] existing there is not subject to the species of air. For the loss of what the differentia adds to the matter of the genus was caused by the weakening made in it and in its accidental forms. Hence, nothing remains of this form except only the intention of the genus, and this is not to say ‘intention’ [understood] as a common predicable, but that which exists there of the nature of the form of air is the individual subject to the form; hence, it is a particular form. Therefore [the intention] existing there is the individual subject to the genus alone, and therefore it is a diminished entity. For it cannot be a perfect entity subject to the genus unless it is subject to some species of [that genus].” // “[...] *forma istius aeris est in potentia in materia istius ignis; ipsa ibi existens non est sub specie aeris. Ex remissionibus enim factis in ipsa et in formis accidentalibus fiebat perditio illius quod addit differentia super materiam generis. Unde nihil manet ex ista forma nisi sola intentio generis, et hoc non est dictu intentio communis praedicabilis, sed istud quod ibi existit de natura formae aeris est individuum sub forma; unde est forma particularis. Ipsa igitur ibi existens est individuum sub solo genere, et ideo est ens diminutum; non enim potest esse ens perfectum sub genere quin sit sub aliqua eius specie.*”

Another helpful passage is *SMet* 11.2.Q3.309-320:

“For example, fire and air not only share in the most primordial matter and in the form of the most general genus existing in that matter, but also in some other more proper matter. However, the matter that is potentially fire is not prime matter, but is an aggregate from prime matter and the form of the most general genus, aggregate in which there is the intention of the genus of the form of fire (*intentio generis formae ignis*), and this aggregate and the differentia which is completive of fire are one in act and two in potential.

the matter of air, and this is the form of fire in potential and becomes the form of fire. Hence, the same thing is first in potential and then in act. But no addition is made from outside, but rather the same thing which is first in potential then becomes actual. For the intention of the form of fire, which remains in the matter of air after it is corrupted, is fire itself (*res ignis*) and the individual of the genus of the form of fire. Then, in virtue of the external agent whose powers enter the matter of air, [those powers] transform the thing that is an individual of the genus of the form of fire. And once it is disposed by many dispositions so that it is not possible to add [another] disposition to it, it becomes the ultimate matter of fire. And this ultimate matter of fire and its form are one and the same in essence. For the whole essence of the form of fire is in this ultimate matter, and it lacks nothing at all except actuality. Hence, when we say that matter and form are one in act, this one thing is not one composite, but rather one nature prior to the composite which ultimate matter and form share. And from this it is evident that this ultimate matter is nothing other than form. Hence, here we have generation of form from form and not generation of form from pure matter.

[523-536] And this can be conceivable in this way: just as something is increased and extended without adding anything external, so too an individual of the genus of the form of fire, disposed by many dispositions, becomes the form of fire. Moreover, the nature of the differentia is in the thing which is the individual of the genus of the form of fire; but the entering powers add to the differentia of the form of fire. However, the genus of the form of fire itself (*res generis formae ignis*) is in the matter of air, and in it the differentia of the form of fire [exists] as diminished being, and this, as a whole, is in potential the form of fire and becomes its form. Hence, it is not corrupted but ameliorated. And from this it is evident that form is made from form, so that when I say ‘from’ that indicates the circumstance of the material cause, which matter is indeed not only matter but part of the form. But if we were to say ‘form is extracted from prime matter’, when I say ‘from’ that indicates the circumstance of the material cause as that in which [form is found], and not that matter is part of the form.

[537-542] And from this it is evident that it is the same thing that is previously in potential and then in act, and not another thing. That is, ultimate matter, which is the common form, remaining the same in number, is previously in potential and then in act.

However, the form of fire is induced from this intention of the genus. This same aggregate is potentially air. It does not follow, however, that fire is air, since the aggregate, which is called the matter of fire and the differentia that is the ultimate form of fire, is one in act and two in potential.” // “*Verbi gratia, ignis et aer non solum communicant in materia primordialissima et in forma generis generalissimi existente in illa materia, sed in aliqua alia materia magis propria. Materia autem quae est in potentia ignis non est materia prima, sed est aggregatum ex materia prima et forma generis generalissimi, in quo quidem aggregato est intentio generis formae ignis, et hoc aggregatum et differentia quae est completiva ignis sunt unum in actu et duo in potentia. Ex ista autem intentione generis inducitur forma ignis. Illud idem aggregatum est in potentia aer; non tamen sequitur quod ignis sit aer, quia illud aggregatum quod dicitur materia ignis et differentia quae est ultima forma ignis est unum in actu et duo in potentia.*”

In Rufus, *individuum* is ambiguous between the fully actualized individual and what is merely singular. In these passages Rufus clearly identifies the *intentio generis* with the singular generic nature (i.e. the *individuum generis* or the ‘individual of the genus’) and not with the fully actualized individual. Thus he says that the *intentio generis* is a diminished entity (*ens diminutum*) insofar as it is not an actualized individual entity.

Hence, this matter and form are one and the same in essence, and this is the reason why matter and form make one truly unified composite.

[543-547] Note, however, that the aggregate from universal prime matter and from the intention of the genus of the form of fire, which is the [genus] itself and the individual of that genus, is fire in potential, and that the same thing is first fire in potential and then fire in act. But note well the mode of generation of fire from such an aggregate, which has already been explained.

[548-551] Moreover, in reply to what we asked about the differentiae being potentially in the genus, we must say that the genus itself (*res generis*) can pertain to each one of the differentiae. For the genus, remaining the same and uncorrupted in its essence, becomes each of them.

[552-555] Moreover, in reply to the contrary argument [9.1.Q1A] we must say that when [Euclid] says “whatever things are the same as one and the same” etc., we should understand [that he means] the same in number. But opposite differentiae are the same generically and not numerically.

[556-563] In reply to the other argument [9.1.Q1B] we should say that genus and differentia are one in act and two in potential. And since they are two in potential, therefore two opposite differentiae have distinct essences. For even though act and potential do not distinguish essence, nonetheless act and act make distinct essences in act. Hence, even though a genus [makes] something actually one with this differentia and something actually one with another differentia, nonetheless this differentia with that one does not [make] something one in act. And therefore opposite species are two in act and not one.

[564-580] In reply to the other argument [9.1.Q1E] we must say that when [Aristotle] says ‘ultimate matter and form are one essentially’, this ultimate matter is nothing other than common form. But from this it does not follow that pure matter (which in no way is form) and form are one essentially. Indeed, they distinguish essence. For the nature of prime matter and the nature of form [are] distinct natures. For the nature of prime matter is that it remains essentially one in number under distinct forms, and it is not numbered by the multiplicity of essence.¹⁹ However, form cannot participate in many matters without being numbered by the multiplicity of essence. For the distinction (*diversitas*)²⁰ of matter is merely quantitative. Hence, it constitutes only mathematical number and not essential number. But the divisibility of form is qualitative and constitutes essential number, and not the number which is an accident. From this it is already evident that prime matter and form are not the same essentially, and nonetheless ultimate matter and form are the same essentially.

¹⁹ Here ‘one’ does not mean ‘actually one’ in the sense we have been discussing, but rather the source of the numerical unity of different hylomorphic compounds.

²⁰ See note 2 above.

[581-584] Suppose someone were to ask in what way is the composite one, since part of the composite is an aggregate of prime matter and the intention of the genus, and this is not truly one but becomes the composite itself, as has been established.

[585-590] In reply to this we must say that the aggregate of prime matter and form is not truly one, since it is nothing but a diminished entity. However, the composite is truly one, since the aggregate of prime matter and form, having many dispositions in this common form, becomes the ultimate matter of the form of the composite, and then it instantaneously becomes the composite itself in act.

[591-594] In reply to the other [argument] [9.1.Q1D] we must say that the subject of act and potential, which indeed share the same essence, is the form itself (*res formae*), which is first in potential and then in act. Or in another way [we can say] that the composite is the subject of act and potential.

[595] But on the contrary:

[596] The composite is entity in act; therefore, it is not the subject of potential.

[597-600] In reply to this we must say that the term ‘composite’ determines neither act nor potential, for, if so, then it would signify act and not disposition. And therefore the composite, insofar as it is signified by a term, can be the subject of act and potential.

[601-606] In reply to the other [argument] [9.1.Q1B] we must say that the proposition ‘act and potency do not distinguish essence’ has truth when one and the same thing is first in potential and then in act, and not otherwise. But prime matter is not in potential the form of fire or of any other thing. Rather, it can receive form, and therefore potential in prime matter and act in form distinguish essence.

[607-611] And notice that act and potential are contrary and relative opposites. Contrary as they are considered in the same thing, and in this way act and potential do not distinguish essence. But they are relative opposites as considered in distinct things—namely, potential in prime matter and act in form—and in this way they distinguish essence.

[612-619] In reply to the other argument [9.2.Q1 args. 3, 6] we must say that, if potential is circumscribed from prime matter and act from form, what remains is not an essence and an essence but only one. For potential in prime matter and act in form distinguish the essence of matter from the essence of form. And we need not posit act in matter, since act in form suffices to distinguish the essence of form from the essence of matter, as a disposition is sufficient for its own cognition and for the cognition of its privation.

SMet 9.7.Q5 (excerpt)

[1679-1688] Note that Aristotle offered a universal solution to the question about the unity of definition, when he said ‘proximate matter and form are one and the same’.²¹ For thus among more material forms, such as the vegetative form and that which is more material and proximate to it (which is the spirit or the vital heat), [these forms] are one in act and two only in potential; and that form is uppermost in the flesh and the vegetative lowermost in the soul, and the union of flesh and soul is there. And therefore Averroes spoke correctly when he said that those who suppose that body and soul are two in act, necessarily posit a bond between them so that they may be united in some manner.

²¹ *Metaph.* 1045b17-19.