

**NICHOLAS OF CUSA:
METAPHYSICAL SPECULATIONS**

**Six Latin Texts
Translated into English**

**by
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**DE THEOLOGICIS COMPLEMENTIS
(Complementary Theological Considerations)**

by
NICHOLAS OF CUSA

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COMPLEMENTARY THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS¹ (*De Theologicis Complementis*)

- 1 Very recently I wrote *De Mathematicis Complementis*² to our Pontiff Nicholas, our most worthy and most learned Pope.³ However, it has seemed to me unsuitable that that work be widely disseminated—as if at my advanced age and at my station in life I were permitted to write to the head of the Church about mathematics, without adding something about that work’s usefulness, symbolically, in regard to theological befigurings. Therefore, I will endeavor to transform the [mathematical] figures of that book into theological befigurings, in order (to the extent that God grants) to behold with mental sight how it is that in the mirror-of-mathematics there shines forth that truth which is sought in and through everything knowable—shines forth not only in a dimly remote likeness but also with a certain bright-shining nearness. But if what I here say is to be understood, then this present book must be appended to that [prior book]; for these present complementary considerations are drawn from mathematics. It is necessary, as well, that one who wishes to obtain fruit from these [present considerations] pay attention to my intent rather than to my words. These theological matters are better seen with the mind’s eye than they can be expressed in words.⁴
- 2 No one fails to know that truth is more assuredly attained in mathematics than in the other liberal arts;⁵ and, thus, we see that those who taste of geometrical learning cling to it with a marvelous love, as if a certain nourishment for the intellectual life were very purely and very simply contained therein. For a geometer is not interested in lines or figures that are of copper or of gold or of wood; rather, he is interested in them as they are in themselves, although they do not exist apart from a material.⁶ Therefore, he views with his sensory eyes perceptible figures in order to be able to view with his mind’s eye mental figures. Moreover, the mind does not less truly behold mental figures than the eyes behold perceptible figures; instead, the mind views figures the more truly the more it views them in themselves as free of material otherness. Now, the senses do not at all attain to figures apart from otherness. For a figure receives otherness from its union with a material, which must be *one* material or *another*. On account of this union a triangular pattern in this floor differs from a triangu-

lar pattern in the wall, and the figure in the one is a truer [triangle] than [is the figure] in the other.⁷ And so, in no material does the figure exist so truly and precisely that it cannot exist more truly and more precisely. Insofar, then, as a trigon, freed from all variable otherness, is present in the mind, it [exists as so truly a trigon that it] cannot exist more truly. Accordingly, since the mind, which views figures in themselves, beholds them as free of perceptible otherness, it discovers that it itself is free of perceptible otherness. Therefore, the mind is free of perceptible material, and it stands in relation to mathematical figures as being their form. If you say that those [mathematical] figures are themselves forms, then the mind will be the form of [those] forms. Hence, the figures will be present in the mind as in their own form; and, consequently, they will be present without otherness. Therefore, whatever [figures] the mind views, it views in themselves. Therefore, the [geometrical objects] viewed by the mind are not present in their perceptible otherness but are present in themselves. Now, that which is free of all otherness exists in no different way from its truth, for its truth is nothing other than a freedom from otherness. However, although our mind is free of all perceptible otherness, it is not free of all otherness. Therefore, the mind—which itself is not free of all otherness (not free, at least, of mental otherness)⁸—sees [geometrical] figures as free of all otherness. Therefore, it views them in their truth, but it does not view them beyond itself. For it *views* them, and this viewing cannot occur beyond itself. For the mind views [them] mentally and not beyond the mind—just as the senses, in attaining [them] perceptibly, do not attain [them] beyond the senses but [only] within the scope of the senses.

Now, although the mind, which views within itself that which is unchangeable, is itself changeable, it does not view what-is-unchangeable in terms of the mind's own changeability (as when anger prevents the mind from being able to discern what is true) but, rather, views what-is-unchangeable in terms of the mind's own unchangeability. But its unchangeability is its truth. Therefore, where the mind views whatever [figures] it views: there the truth of it itself and of all the things that it views is present. Therefore, the truth wherein the mind views all things is the mind's form. Hence, in the mind a light-of-truth is present; through this light the mind exists, and in it the mind views itself and all other things. By way of illustration: in a wolf's sight there is a light through which the seeing occurs;⁹ and in this light the wolf sees whatever it sees. God concreated with the wolf such a

light for its eyes, in order that the wolf be able to hunt, for the sake of sustaining its life; without this light the wolf could not seek its prey at nighttime. If so, then God did not fail to concreate with the intellectual nature (which is nourished from the pursuit of truth) the light that is necessary for it. But the mind views Truth itself (through which it views itself and all other things) only with respect to the fact *that* Truth is, not with respect to *what* Truth is. By way of illustration: Sight does not [directly] gaze upon the brightness of that sunlight through which it sees everything visible. Nevertheless, sight is aware that it does not see without that light. In this way, sight attains unto the fact *that* that light is but does not at all attain unto *what* that light is. Nor does sight attain unto the quantity of that light except with respect to the fact that that light is so bright that it exceeds sight's power. Analogous points hold as regards the mind.

Hence, truth in the mind is as an invisible mirror in which the mind views whatever-is-visible-through-truth. But that mirroring simplicity is of such a high degree that it exceeds the mind's power and acuity.¹⁰ Yet, the more the mind's power becomes progressively increased and sharpened, the more certainly and clearly the mind views all things in the mirror-of-truth.¹¹ Now, the mind's power is increased by the mind's viewing; it is kindled as is a spark when glowing. And because the mind's power increases when from potency it is more and more brought to actuality¹² by the light-of-truth, it will never be depleted, because it will never arrive at that degree at which the light-of-truth cannot elevate it¹³ more highly. Thus, mental viewing, or speculation,¹⁴ is the most delightful and most inexhaustible nourishment for the mind. Through speculation the mind enters ever further into its own most joyous life; and speculation is the mind's movement from *that it is* toward *what it is*. But since the *what* is infinitely distant from the *that*, the mind's movement will never cease. Moreover, that movement is a supremely delightful movement, because it is a movement toward the mind's life and, hence, contains within itself rest. For, in moving, the mind is not made tired but, rather, is greatly inflamed. And the more swiftly the mind is moved, the more delightfully it is conveyed by the light-of-life unto the mind's own life.

But the movement of the mind is like a movement both in a straight line and in a circular line, for it begins from *that it is*, or faith, and it proceeds to seeing, or *what it is*. And although [these two]¹⁵ are separated as if by an infinite line, nevertheless this movement [of the mind] aims at being completed and at finding, in its beginning, its

end and its *what*—where there is *that it is* and faith.¹⁶ For the mind seeks this coincidence, where the beginning of its movement and the end of its movement coincide; and this movement is circular. Hence, the speculative mind proceeds by a very straight movement to a coincidence of maximally distant things. And so, the measure-of-movement of a speculative and godlike mind is befigured by a line in which straightness coincides with circularity. Therefore, it is necessary that there be a single simple measure of a straight line and of a circular line. Now, my book *De Mathematicis Complementis* shows (1) that in a oneness of simple measure a straight line and a circular line can coincide and (2) that they can do so not only in regard to things theological but also in regard to things mathematical. That book makes us certain that that which must be affirmed in mathematics *mathematically* must, without doubt, be affirmed in theology *theologically*.

- 3 In my book *De Mathematicis Complementis* there is explained the art of finding a circular circumference that is equal to a [given] straight line; and this art is attained through the coincidence of three circles. [Take a case where] a polygon of equal sides both is inscribed in a circle and circumscribes a circle: the circumference of the circumscribing circle, that of the inscribed circle, and that of the polygon are different.¹⁷ However, in the case of a [given] circle, the circle which circumscribes it and the circle which is inscribed in it do not differ.¹⁸ Hence, these three circles—viz., the inscribed, the circumscribing, and the one that represents the circumference equal to a [given] polygon's—coincide in circumference, in magnitude, and in all other properties of a circle. And the circles are three in such a way that they are one; and it is a triune circle. This [fact of triunity] cannot appear in just any way, but only when one looks at polygons. For in the case of a polygon the two circles—viz., the inscribed circle and the circumscribing circle—appear as different from each other; and the circumference of the polygon is greater than the circumference of the inscribed circle and is lesser than that of the circumscribing circle. Therefore, the three different circumferences lead us unto a knowledge of a triune isocircumferential circle.¹⁹ And this trinity, which in the case of all polygons is present with a difference of circumferences, is, in the case of a circle, present without any distinction of magnitude; and the one circle is in every respect equal to the other, and the one circle is not outside the other. If such is the case with regard to things mathematical, then such will be the case more truly with regard to

things theological.²⁰

Hence, the coincidence of a circular line and of a straight line cannot be denied by him who sees that truth is unchangeability. For if truth is unchangeability, then it does not admit of more or less. For example, if it is true that this piece of wood is two-feet long, then the piece of wood is neither longer nor shorter [than two feet]. Therefore, truth is infinity, for only infinity cannot be greater or lesser. Therefore, if there is posited a circular circumference which is such that it cannot be larger because [its magnitude is so great that] there is no end of it, then that circumference is infinite; and, likewise, a circle is infinite whose circumference is infinite. Therefore, the [infinite] circle cannot be smaller, because it has no parts. And since the larger a circle it is, the straighter is its circumference, the infinite circumference of the circle is rectilinear.²¹ Therefore, the circular and the rectilinear coincide in the infinite. Therefore, infinity is absolute rectitude, or absolute justice. Therefore, if we look at the description in terms of which a circle is constructed, we find (1) that a point is present antecedently and (2) that from the point a line is unfolded and (3) that from the point and the line a circle is unfolded. Therefore, in every circle we find a center, a radius, and a circumference; without these present together, we do not apprehend that the figure is a circle rather than not a circle.

But if an infinite circle is posited, then its center, its radius, and its circumference must possess the highest equality [to one another]. For the center of an infinite circle is infinite.²² For we cannot say that what is infinite is greater than its center. For that which cannot be smaller, inasmuch as it is infinite and boundless, cannot be said to be greater than its center. For its center is the end-point of its radius, [and] the end-point of what is infinite is infinite. Therefore, the center of an infinite circle is infinite, just as its radius is infinite and, likewise, its circumference. Therefore, the equality of an infinite circle's center, radius, and circumference is maximal. And since a plurality of things cannot be infinite²³ (because, in that case, none of them would be infinite, since more than one thing's being infinite implies a contradiction), the center, the radius, and the circumference will be a single infinite thing. But we see that polygons are constructed from straight lines. Therefore, this infinite circle, with which every [infinite] polygon coincides,²⁴ will be of infinite sides.²⁵ Moreover, as regards every polygon, we see that inscribed circles and circumscribing circles are different from the circumference of the polygon, but we see that

in an isocircumferential circle²⁶ these three circumferences coincide and that [the isocircumferential] circle is triune. Likewise, then, in the-ological [befigurings] we find an infinite, triune “Circle,” if we look at “polygons,” i.e., at delimited creatures. For [the infinite circle] is a triune circle in which the center is the circle, and the radius is the circle, and the circumference is the circle; and this is the same thing as being the inscribed circle and the initially posited circle and the circumscribing circle. Therefore, we would not apprehend the trinity of the infinite circle if we looked only at its infinity. But when we turn our attention to delimited lateral—and delimited angular—figures and forms, we apprehend that the infinite circle is triune. But supreme equality brings it about that the one circle is in the other and that there is one infinite circumference of all [three circles].

We must carefully note the following: that we have arrived at the truth of the equality of the measure of the circular and of the rectilinear only when we have seen that the [infinite] isocircumferential circle is triune because of a coincidence of differences that are found in polygons. Similarly, without what is triunely Infinite, the truth of no thing can be attained. For just as the [infinite] circle measures every polygon and is neither greater nor lesser [than any polygon], because it is a triune circle in which all differences among polygons coincide (as is illustrated mathematically), so too what is triunely Infinite is the Form, the Truth, or the Measure of all that is not it itself; and it is Equality itself, which is, indeed, the Truth²⁷ of all things. For it is not greater or lesser than any positable or formable thing²⁸ but is the most equal Form of every formable form²⁹ and is the Actuality of all potentiality.³⁰ For he who looks unto that which is triunely Infinite—by ascending from mathematical figures unto theological befigurings, through adding [the concept of] infinity to the mathematical figures—and who then frees himself from theological befigurings in order mentally to contemplate only that triunely Infinite Being,³¹ will see (insofar as it be granted him) all things as enfoldedly One and will see the One as unfoldedly all things.³² But if he looks at the Infinite without its relation to finite things, he will not apprehend finite things—not their being or their truth or their measure. Therefore, neither the Creator nor the creature can be seen if the Infinite is not affirmed to be triune.

4 The ancients sought the art of equating a circle to a square.³³ They presupposed that this [equating] would be possible. Now, in every-

one's opinion, equality enfolds within itself both a circle and a square. Therefore, let us add *infinity* to *equality*. It will be evident to us that infinite equality cannot be unequal to anything. For none of all the things that can be posited can exceed infinite equality, because infinite equality cannot be less equal. And, likewise, it will not be more equal to one thing and less equal to another; rather, of necessity, it is the Idea or truth (or exemplar) or measure of whatever things can admit of more and less. For everything that is not infinite equality itself—through which alone all equal things are equal—is more equal to one thing than to another.³⁴ Moreover, than any given equality whatsoever that obtains between different things there can always be posited a more greatly obtaining equality.³⁵ And only by means of the measuring-standard of absolute and infinite equality can we know that some one pair of things is more equal than is another pair of things. Therefore, absolute equality measures both all straight things and all circular things, both of which coincide, necessarily, in absolute equality's enfolding.

And if you consider closely: that which is presupposed by every investigation is light itself,³⁶ which, as well, leads to what is being sought. For example, those who sought the squaring of the circle presupposed the coincidence, in equality, of a circle and a square. Assuredly, this coinciding is not possible in regard to things perceptible. For there is not positable a square that is not unequal to any positable circle present in a material. Therefore, not with their fleshly eyes but, rather, with their mental eyes [those inquirers] saw the equality that they presupposed. And they endeavored to manifest it by means of reason; but they failed, because reason does not admit that there are coincidences of opposites.³⁷ But the coincidence of those features which are found to be diverse in every polygon (even [in a polygon] which is of equal circumference with another)³⁸ ought to have been sought *intellectually*, in terms of a circle; and [then those inquirers] would have arrived at their goal.

From the foregoing we infer that nothing is knowable in the way in which it can be known—except by means of an infinite intellect, which is infinite equality that precedes everything diverse and different and other and unequal and opposite and all that names an inequality. Only in and through an infinite intellect is everything intelligible measured. And herein is disclosed the secret of how an inquirer presupposes what he seeks and, yet, does not presuppose it, because he is seeking it. For everyone who seeks-to-know presupposes

(1) that there exists knowledge, through which every knower knows, and (2) that nothing is knowable that would not be known actually by means of infinite knowledge, and (3) that infinite knowledge is the truth, equality, and measure of all knowledge, and (4) that only by means of infinite knowledge is there known whatever is known.³⁹ Therefore, a seeker after knowledge is motivated by that art, or that infinite knowledge. And if, in the light of that art, which has been bestowed upon him, he continues onward in what he has presupposed, he will be led unto what he has been seeking. And if you attend more closely, [you will see that] when *infinity* is added to *what is delimited* (for example, when knowledge is spoken of as infinite), this addition to what is delimited serves only to remove the delimitation, so that that which is signified as delimited—signified by a locution or a term—is viewed mentally as infinite or limitless.⁴⁰ And when in this way the mind views the delimited limitlessly, i.e., views the finite infinitely, then the mind sees it beyond all oppositeness and otherness, which are found only in things delimited. For there cannot be delimitation without difference; and so, in delimitation there is found variety, which, depending upon whether it is a large amount or a small amount, receives [different] names. Therefore, if delimitation is removed, difference passes over into concordance, and inequality into equality, and curvature into straightness, and ignorance into knowledge, and darkness into light. And then we see that when limits are removed, the plurality of delimited beings is found by us in a non-plural way in a single limitless and ineffable Beginning.⁴¹

- 5 Notice further that every [regular] polygon is delimited by a certain number of angles equally distant from its center and that it obtains its name or term in accordance with the number of angles on account of which it is called a polygon. For example, a polygonal figure of three angles is named by the term “trigon”; and a figure of four angles is named by the term “tetragon”—and so on. Now, the more angles a polygon of equal sides has, the more it resembles a circle; for if you consider with respect to polygons, [you will see that] a circle is of infinite angles.⁴² But if you consider only with respect to a circle itself, you will find in the circle no angle; indeed, a circle is unangular and undelimited [by angles]. And so, a circle, being unangular and undelimited [by angles], enfolds within itself all angular limitations and all posited and positable polygons.⁴³ For if a trigon is present in a tetragon, and a tetragon is present in a pentagon, and so on,

then you see that all posited and ever-further positable polygons are present in a circle. Therefore, note carefully that an *infinite* circle enfolds within itself every delimited figure, or form, but not in the way that a finite circle does. Because a finite circle is very spacious, it contains within itself less spacious [figures]—as a whole contains its own part. But the infinite circle does not enfold in that way but enfolds as do truth and equality. No creature has any portion of omnipotence (as a polygon has some features of a finite circle),⁴⁴ for omnipotence, which does not admit of more or less, is indivisible. But because a finite circle admits of more and less, it cannot enfold polygons in the manner in which omnipotence enfolds everything delimitable.⁴⁵

From multiangular figures and from a [finite] circle, which enfolds all formable polygons, the mind ascends in the foregoing way unto theological befigurings.⁴⁶ And after having cast aside these befigurings, the mind views the infinite power of the First Beginning and views the enfolding of creatures and views their differences and their likenesses to the Simple [Beginning]. Moreover, since an infinite trigon is an infinite circle, and an infinite tetragon is an infinite circle, and so on: an infinite circle is the form of forms, or the figure of figures, and is the Idea of trigon and of tetragon and of pentagon and is the equality-of-being of trigon and of tetragon, etc. And in accordance with the positing of an infinite circle, it follows that all figures are that which they are.⁴⁷

Behold a marvelous thing: viz., that when a mathematician forms a polygon, he looks unto its infinite exemplar. For example, when he draws a trigonal quantity, he does not look unto a trigonal quantity but unto what is unqualifiedly trigonal and is free of all quantity and quality, of all magnitude and multitude. Hence, the fact that he draws something quantitative does not result from the exemplar; nor does he himself intend to make something quantitative. But because he cannot draw it [except in such a way] that the triangle which he mentally conceives becomes perceptible, there happens to it quantity, without which it cannot become perceptible.⁴⁸ Therefore, the triangle unto which he looks is neither large nor small nor delimited in magnitude or in multitude. Therefore, it is infinite. Accordingly, this infinite triangle, which is the exemplar in which the mind of the befigurer views the trigon, is not *other* than the exemplar unto which the mind looks when it draws a tetragon or a pentagon or a circle. For since that circle toward which the mind turns when it draws a circle is not quanti-

tative, it is not larger or smaller than a non-quantitative trigon but is equality-of-being. Therefore, there is a single infinite equality-of-being unto which I look when I draw different figures. Therefore, [by comparison], when the Creator creates all things, He creates all of them while He is turned toward Himself, because He is that Infinity which is Equality-of-being.⁴⁹

- 6 If you consider still further how it is that you draw a circle, [you will recognize the following]: First you put down a centerpoint; then you extend that point into a line; thereafter you rotate the line around the point; and, in this way, a circular line arises from the point and the straight line. Therefore, if in doing this you look unto absolute equality-of-being, you will see in it something similar [to the immediately foregoing]. For that circle unto which you look, which is ineffable or nameable by the names of all figures, is such that it has a center, from which there is a line; and from the center and the line there is a circumference. But because that circle is infinite: the center, the line, and the circumference are equality itself—as I mentioned earlier-on.⁵⁰ Hence, the center was not present before the line, nor were the center and the line present before the circumference; for if the opposite were true, there would not be supreme equality of center, line, and circumference, nor would they be a single infinity. Therefore, in infinity, that equality is only eternity.⁵¹ Therefore, from eternity, there is center, line, and circumference. Now, the line is the unfolding of the point; and the circumference is the unfolding of the point and the line. Therefore, in eternity, the center eternally begets, or unfolds, from its own enfolding power a consubstantial begotten thing, viz., the line; and the center together with the line eternally unfolds the union, or circumference. This is the way, then, in which exists the infinite fecundity unto which the mind looks when it draws a circle, which it cannot draw apart from time and quantity. In like manner, too, when [a mathematician] proposes to draw a polygon of equal sides, so that its angles are equidistant from its center, he sees to it that in this way he forms a polygon from (1) a center and (2) a line which is an equality-of-distance of the center from the angles and (3) a circumference, or periphery. Therefore, he looks unto an infinite fecundity in order to make that-which-he-is-proposing-to-make perfect and beautiful and agreeable and pleasing.

Similarly, the Creator Himself, looking unto Himself and His infinite fecundity, creates the [respective] fecund essence of creatures.⁵²

In this essence is present an enfolding beginning-of-power, which is the creature's center, or being (*entitas*); this latter enfolds within itself the creature's power. And the power-of-being which is enfolded in the center is unfolded as if in an educed line, which is power-of-being that is begotten, or unfolded, from the [creature's] being [*ens*]. And from the center and the line together, there proceeds the circumference, or operation. And [in an illustratively analogous way], note [in the case of God] (1) that the center is the Paternal Beginning, which with regard to creatures can be called *Being* (*entitas*), and (2) that the line is as a Beginning from a Beginning and, thus, is *Equality*: for the Beginning-from-a-Beginning has the highest equality with the Beginning from which it exists.⁵³ And the circumference is as a Uniting, or a Union; for from Infinite Being and its Equality there proceeds Union, for Union unites Equality to Oneness.⁵⁴ And in like manner: when the Creator looks unto Himself, He creates oneness (or being, or center) and form (or equality-of-being) and the union of both. But creatures flow forth from the Creator in the best way in which the condition of [each's] nature permits and in a [respective] likeness of the Creator—just as I have elsewhere more extensively set forth my conception (such as it is) of this matter.⁵⁵

- 7 From mathematics we know that “straight” is predicated in one way only. For whether a straight line is long or short, it is not more straight or less straight than is another straight line. Therefore, straightness is conceived to be infinite because it is not confined by quantity and does not admit of more and less. Therefore, absolute straightness is infinite. By contrast, curvature cannot be infinite. Accordingly, the “circular line” of an infinite circle cannot be a curve, because that line is infinite.⁵⁶ Therefore, all curvature is confined by the limits of its own magnitude. Moreover, curvature has no exemplar except straightness. For he who wishes to draw a curved line looks mentally at a straight line and causes the curved line to bend away from the straight line. Now, [finite] circular curvature is the curvature which is the closest likeness to infinite straightness.⁵⁷ For infinite straightness is eternity itself,⁵⁸ which has no beginning or middle or end or quantity or quality. But circular curvature, which, of necessity, is quantitative and composite, has a coincidence of beginning and end; and, of necessity, circular curvature derives from infinite straightness as from its own beginning and truth. For curvature does not exist from itself but exists from that straightness which is its measuring-standard; for the

straight measures the curved. Therefore, circular curvature veers from infinite straightness in a more perfect way than does non-circular curvature, because just as [infinite] straightness lacks a beginning, a middle, and an end, so in circular curvature these coincide and are not at all distant, or different. Hence, [finite] circular curvature is more like the infinite than is finite straightness, where beginning, middle, and end differ. For infinite straightness, on account of its infinity,⁵⁹ is omnipotent and creative. Therefore, circular curvature is more similar to infinite *straightness*, because circular curvature is more similar to the *infinite* than is finite straightness.⁶⁰

Therefore, all who have a mind are favorably disposed toward circular figures, which appear to us complete and beautiful because of their uniformity and equality and simplicity. And this [appearing] is nothing other than the fact that in a circle the form of forms⁶¹ shines forth more clearly than in any other figure. Note how greatly the mind is favorably disposed toward the exemplar of a circle⁶²—toward its infinite form and beauty, unto which alone it looks. When the mind is favorably disposed toward some creature, doesn't it also notice that in this way it is looking unto the Creator, who is the mind's own Love and Delight? The following, then, is the careful consideration of one who is seeking God: (1) that he consider toward what his mind is looking when he loves and is favorably disposed, and (2) that he turn to what has been presupposed, where he will find the ineffable sweetness of Love. For if everything loved has from love the fact that it is lovable, then if Absolute Love is tasted of, it will not be abandoned.⁶³

- 8** We must not pass over the fact that if a circle is rolled along a straight line, it touches the line at only [one] point [at a time], for its circumference is equally distant from its center.⁶⁴ Moreover, that tangential straight-line touches the circular line at only [one] point [at a time]. Hence, on the basis of this [illustration], consider that time, being that which revolves as if circularly, has a figuration like a circle's,⁶⁵ because it is constituted by the quasi-circular motion of the heavens; for time is the measure of motion.⁶⁶ Therefore, when time, which bears a likeness to eternity,⁶⁷ revolves, it does so in the way in which a circle would be rolled along an infinite straight-line. For time does not exist in and of itself but exists in rolling along an infinite line, or in revolving on eternity; and so, the whole of time does not exist in and of itself but has its existence only insofar as it revolves on the point of eternity. And because this fact is true of every circle, whether

large or small (viz., the fact that it does not exist otherwise than in point-after-point contact with a straight line or with an infinite line), each creature (considered temporally) can be likened in its duration to a large or a small circle which revolves. And any kind of duration, whether long or short, will not partake more of eternity than does another duration. For in the one *now* of eternity all circles exist and revolve. And, in this way, you see how it is that eternity is the substantial being of time and is the measure of all duration, even though it is altogether simple and is indivisible and is unimpartible to time.

Moreover, you see the impossibility of time's being eternal (although its revolutions—as if circular, because of the coincidence of their beginning and end—do not seem to have had a beginning). For since circular motion is curved and bends back on itself, it cannot possibly exist from itself; and so, it exists from a creator, viz., eternity and infinite straightness. For curvature presupposes its own creator; when it deviates from its creator, it is called curvature. Therefore, as I mentioned in *On Learned Ignorance*,⁶⁸ it is not true that there is *precise* circular revolution. Nor is it true that the circular revolution of the sun's motion has already occurred an infinite number of times. For infinity cannot belong to *a number of* circular revolutions. For if we can number ten past revolutions, then we can also number one hundred and one thousand and all of them.⁶⁹ If someone says that the revolutions cannot all be numbered but that an infinity [of revolutions] has already taken place, and if he goes on to say that there will be a future revolution [of the sun] in a future year, then there will be infinite revolutions plus one—something which is impossible. Even if it were true that the end of the sun's revolutions were to be on March 11, it would be true that the sun's revolutions had a beginning and have not been going on eternally and are not an infinity. For eternity and infinity cannot befit motion whose measuring-standard is time⁷⁰ but can befit only motion whose measuring-standard is eternity—just as if in God begottenness and procession (about which [I spoke] earlier)⁷¹ were to be called by me “a movement of infinite fecundity, whose measuring-standard is eternity.”

- 9 Let it not trouble you to consider how it is that the capacity⁷² of an isocircumferential circle⁷³ exceeds the entire capacity of all formable polygons and enfolds within itself all capacity and is, actually, the capacity of all possible capacity. But if there is posited a circle that is of equal circumference with a polygon, it is not thereby of

equal capacity but is always of greater capacity and does not lose its perfection, even if it *is* of equal circumference.⁷⁴ On the basis of this [illustration] you will be able to investigate how it is that the Creator (although He is Supreme Equality and the true Measuring-standard of things and is neither greater nor lesser) never ceases to be of infinite power. Moreover, you know that the more *one* and the more *simple* a form is, the greater are its perfection and its enfolding. Now, a circle is simpler than is any other formable figure; and so, in comparison with all other figures' power, the power of a circle's capacity is the most perfect. Therefore, [by illustrative analogy], that Form which, because of its infinite simplicity, is the Form of all forms is of infinite power.⁷⁵

Note more closely how it is that from a point a finite straight line arises and that from a straight line various polygonal figures arise and that, lastly, a circular figure arises. The figure of least capacity is the trigon, and that of maximal capacity is the circle. And an infinite number of isocircumferential polygons fall in-between, being of lesser capacity than a circle but of greater capacity than a trigon. But all polygons and every circle arise from a single point. Now, their [respective] figure, or shape, is a likeness of their form. See, then, how it is that the form of a trigon, which is the lowest form, has its own power, which is its trigonal capacity; and, likewise, the form of a tetragon has its own power, and so on. From this consideration you know that no form lacks its own power.⁷⁶ Now, polygons receive their respective name from their number of angles (so that a trigon is that which has three angles, and a tetragon is that which has four angles, and so on *ad infinitum*). But the form is that which gives the name or the distinctness. Therefore, number is [mathematical] form. Now, every number is from the one, in which it is enfolding.⁷⁷ Therefore, just as a line flows forth from a point, so number flows forth from the one.

And because a polygon cannot exist apart from line and number, a polygon is in the power of a line. For example, from a straight line there is possible to be made a trigon, a tetragon, a pentagon, etc.; but these are not actually constructed unless a line that is straight is made angular, is joined at the extremes, and is formed through a number. However, number exists only from mind;⁷⁸ indeed, whoever lacks a mind cannot number. Therefore, mind is the efficient cause of [mathematical] form. Hence, every [mathematical] form is a likeness of a mental conceiving on the part of Infinite Power.⁷⁹ Therefore, the Creator is seen to have made two things. [He made] a point, which is *al-*

most nothing. (For between a point and nothing there is no intermediary; for a point is to such an extent almost-nothing that if you added a point to a point, there would result no more than if you were to add nothing to nothing.)⁸⁰ The other thing [He made is] *almost Himself*, viz., the one.⁸¹ And He united those two things, so that there is *one point*; and in that one point was present the enfolding of the universe. Therefore, the universe is conceived to be brought forth from that one point in the following way: viz., as if from one point a line were brought forth, so that from the line there were made a trigon and a tetragon and the ultimate and most simple and most perfect thing—the thing most like the Creator—viz., a circle. For if apart from three angles a trigon⁸² cannot be made from a line, then in the form of a trigon oneness and trinity coincide—viz., a oneness of essence and a trinity of angles. And in a tetragon oneness and fourness coincide—viz., a oneness of essence and a fourness of angles. And so on. But in a circle oneness and infinity coincide—a oneness of essence and an infinity of angles. Or better: [in a circle] infinity *is* oneness. For the circle is the whole angle. Thus, the circle is both one and infinite,⁸³ and it is the actuality of all the angles that are formable from a line.

From the foregoing considerations you may elicit how it is that the Creator of the one universe caused a single universe to come forth from a single point that He created—caused it in the following way, viz., as our mind, when it wills to draw a figure, begins from a point and extends the point into a line and then bends the line into angles (in order to enclose a surface) and [thus] makes a polygon. And because in my book *Complementum Mathematicae*⁸⁴ there is explained how it is that (1) through a given lengthening, a line is made into a triangle and (2) through another and greater lengthening, the line is made into a tetragon and (3) through maximal lengthening, it is made into a circle: a circle [symbolically] befits the most perfect creatures (who are most similar to their Creator),⁸⁵ viz., celestial minds;⁸⁶ for nothing is more noble than is mind.⁸⁷ But like the source of the universe, the human mind is seen to be a single point, as it were, which, having been brought forth into a living line, is further extended, so that it becomes of a certain capacity and is made into, say, a trigon. And since the mind has a mental life and since it experiences itself as “extended” unto a certain capacity, or capability, it extends itself [still further] unto a tetragon (which is larger) or unto a pentagon, etc.⁸⁸ And the mind will never be able thus to extend itself to such a capacity that it will not be able to be more capable. Therefore, the mind con-

tinually comes closer to a circle's capacity, which it never attains by its own power. But by the grace of the Creator it is caught up from "angular capacity" unto "circular capacity"⁸⁹—just as from the reading of particular books scholars are caught up unto the universal art, and the mastery, of reading all books. For he who reads particular writings reads by—and after awhile is perfected by—the light of that art, so that he becomes a master. And this is a fitting figurative likeness by which you can be led to see the following (just as we experience mathematically regarding polygons and circles): viz., that there is a difference between (1) those minds which have obtained the perfection of their mental capacity through having been caught up⁹⁰ unto the intelligible world and (2) those minds which search for their capacity in the perceptible world and beneath particular perceptible signs.

- 10** But although a circle is the most perfect of [all] figures, nevertheless it cannot happen that a [finite] circle be equal to infinite straightness, which is also an infinite circle.⁹¹ For from an infinite straight-line no figure can be made, since the infinite line is, actually, all figures that can be made. Hence, it is not the case that infinite straightness is changeable and, thus, that it [can] exist otherwise than it does; nor does it have end-points. Therefore, although a finite straight-line bears a likeness to an infinite straight-line, nevertheless the finite line (because of its finitude and imperfection) has very much potentiality; and from it can be made enclosed plane-figures, although it itself is not actually any [of these figures]. And when from a finite straight-line a figure (e.g., a trigon) is made (because the line's ends have been conjoined), then another polygon cannot be made from the same line unless, after the present figure has been undone, there is a reversion to linear straightness. Herefrom you know that form and limit coincide, so that the following is not the case: viz., that form is in potency to form, so that from one form another form is made. For form is the delimitation of motion and the actuality of potentiality, but it is not potentiality. Consequently, species are not transformed [into other species]. Nonetheless, one form can be present in another form (as a trigon is present in a tetragon, although the trigon never becomes the tetragon); but the form which is present in another form is not a specific form but is a generic form,⁹² since there can be only one specific form of [any] one thing, i.e., of [any] particular. Therefore, that form which is present in another form is present there as what-is-generic is present in what-is-specific, as what is vegetable is present

in what is capable of perceiving, and—in the case of man—as what is capable of perceiving is present in what is rational.⁹³

Moreover, a trigon within a tetragon does not give its name to the tetragon but the latter receives its name from its own defining form, which enfolds within its own capacity the trigonal form. Analogously, form is present in form in such a way that the defining form (which does not admit of more and less, and which consists of something indivisible) enfolds within itself (i.e., within its own capacity) the lower forms. In the defining form the lower forms are present as enfolded and not as formally (i.e., as actually) unfolded. Moreover, if you consider a straight line, [you will see that] form delimits a thing. For since from a [straight] line any kind of polygon can be drawn, then if a trigonal shape limits the line's potency, [the figure] is a trigon. And since "trigon" signifies three angles, and since every polygon has angles, the [polygon's] substantial form is not designated by [reference to] angles, which are common to all polygons—and also not by the sides or by the line that is the circumference. For circumference, sides, and angles are common to all polygons; but the number of angles is not common to them. Therefore, the substantial form of a polygon is designated by a number which is specific.⁹⁴ Therefore, if because oneness delimits a thing and is as a delimiting form it is posited as a beginning, then number will be the substance of the thing. And the following must be noted: viz., that if oneness is substance, then so also is number, because number is composed of units.

But if in the order of nature a thing has its existence prior to having its being-distinct—or, rather, if it has its existence prior to its being indistinct from itself but distinct from other things (so that form antecedently gives being and, subsequently to that giving, there follows that the thing is indistinct from itself but distinct from each other thing, so that for this reason the thing is said to be one thing)—then on the basis of that oneness which is the beginning of number the thing is said to be one. And because oneness is subsequent to existing, it is an accident [of existing]; for whatever is subsequent to existing is its accident. Oneness, considered in this way, *happens* to a thing and is the beginning of number. And in that case numbers are not the substance of a thing, because they are unfolded from an accidental beginning. However, oneness, which is a beginning, enfolds the entire power of oneness. Thus, it is a beginning that both delimits and makes-to-be-one: it delimits in making-to-be-one, and it makes-to-be-one in delimiting. Therefore, whoever looks unto this coincidence

sees why the Pythagoreans and the Peripatetics differ in their assertions, when the Pythagoreans assert that number is a substance and the Peripatetics assert that it is an accident. But you yourself see, beyond both assertions, the coincidence that obtains with regard to number, in which simplicity and compositeness coincide. For the compositeness of number is from number itself; and so, the compositeness is a simplicity, as [I have written] elsewhere about this matter.⁹⁵ For where the Peripatetics place being (viz., beyond that which they speak of as substance and accident), there *the one* (which is convertible with *being*) must also be placed. Hence, number, which is derived from mind,⁹⁶ must be judged to be something different insofar as it is from the oneness of the Uncreated Mind and insofar as it is from a created mind. For the oneness of the former number is analogous to natural form, whereas the oneness of the latter number is analogous to an artificial form. Natural form is substantial; therefore, natural form is a number derived from the oneness of the Uncreated Mind. But artificial form, which is a figure, is accidental, because it comes after the thing's existence; therefore, its oneness is accidental. Hence, when we call a form substantial, we say that it is one from a oneness which can be only substantial; moreover, that oneness of substantial form is not anything other than the form itself. Hence, when that one form gives being, its giving being is its delimiting, uniting, and forming. Because I have quite often elsewhere, in very many of my works,⁹⁷ touched upon this topic, let it here suffice that I have spoken about it as I have.

- 11** We must not overlook the fact that there can be exhibited a circular line that is equal to a given straight line, but not conversely.⁹⁸ For only if the former equality is known can the latter equality be known—and then [only] as proportionally [equal], as is explained in my oft-mentioned book *Complementum*.⁹⁹ The ancients sought after the squaring of a circle;¹⁰⁰ and this investigation presupposes that if a circular line is given, then there can be given a straight line that is equal to it. But they were never able to obtain this result. If they had sought after the circularizing of a square, they might have succeeded. Herefrom you know that a circle is not measured but measures—i.e., [by illustrative analogy], that eternity is not measurable, because it exceeds everything measurable; instead, eternity measures all duration. The infinite is not measurable, because it is infinite and endless. Therefore, it cannot be enclosed by the limits of any measure; rather,

it itself is the measure of all things. For the infinite is the end and the limit of all things, even as the absolute measure is not measurable by any contracted measure whatsoever. And because apart from the absolute measure no measure has its being-a-measure, the absolute measure is the true and most adequate measure of every contracted and nameable measure. (By way of illustration, whiteness is not measurable by anything white; but, rather, it measures everything white, since what is white has from whiteness the fact that it is white.)

From the foregoing, therefore, it is evident that God is incomprehensible by every creature, since He is immeasurable by every mind; for He is greater than every [mind's] capacity, or capability. But if God is to be attained, then He is attained not as He is attainable in Himself but [only] as He is attainable by the attaining [mind]. And this [attainment] occurs in equality-of-measure with the [mind] that attains Him. Thus, all minds attain God in conformity to their capability—just as given any finite straight-line, there is given a circular line that is neither greater nor lesser [than it]. And that which is neither greater nor lesser we call equal—although, properly speaking, it is not equal insofar as equality concerns substance. For one substance is not more a substance than is another substance,¹⁰¹ because substance is not quantity but is substance; hence, it does not admit of greater and lesser, as does quantity. Nevertheless, there does not follow that all substances are equal, for one substance is more perfect than is another.¹⁰²

Consider, then, the following: A single visible object is seen by many men but not equally, for two men cannot see in a precisely equal way. For each of them, by means of his own unique ocular angle attains what is visible; and each measures it and judges it to be neither greater nor lesser than as he attains it by means of his own eye. Nevertheless, the visible, as it is visible, is not attained precisely by any eye. Similar facts hold regarding mind and its object, viz., Truth, or God. For the capability through which the mind measures is analogous to the angle through which sight sees. Yet, there is this difference: viz., that sight qua sight cannot change its angle or make it larger or smaller in order to see more truly and accurately, because that angle is not in sight but is in the instrument [of the eye]; however, the capability of the intellect does not reside in a [corporeal] instrument. For the intellect's capability does not adhere to a corporeal instrument, as do the senses; rather, its capability (*possibilitas*) is actualized by the instrument. Its capability can be actualized progressively more and more—as if a point (in whose power is an ever-

more-extendible line) were brought from potentiality to actuality, so that the resultant line would be one-foot long and so that the mind would measure by means of such a line. In that case, the mind would measure all things in terms of a foot-length. But if the extending of the point were continued still further, so that the line became two-foot long, then the mind would measure all things in terms of a two-foot length.

However, the mind operates in an opposite way; for a unified, or concentrated, power is the greater power.¹⁰³ Suppose that the mind is conceived, first of all, as a certain confused measure, as if the mind were a line of uncertain length—a line which were alive and which contracted itself from that confused and uncertain length to a known length. In other words, suppose that the line contracted itself in the direction of its middle-point, so that it became a line (called a *pertica*)¹⁰⁴ used for measuring fields, because more subtle measurements could not be arrived at by using it. Indeed, suppose that everything measurable could be assessed only according to that gross measure. Subsequently, if the line contracted itself still more in the direction of the middle, or the point, so that it became one-foot long, then even more subtly and more accurately would it measure everything measurable. And if in this way the line were ever more unified and simplified, its power of measuring would be increased ever further and would be made ever more accurate and would come ever closer to preciseness.

From the foregoing, you may infer that the human mind is not the actuality¹⁰⁵ of the body in the way that sight is the actuality of the eye. For the mind's power does not depend on the [corporeal] instrument¹⁰⁶ but is as fire which exists potentially and which, having been brought from potency by means of some motion or other,¹⁰⁷ has within itself a motion [of its own], through which it is actualized progressively more and more. Now, fire is analogous to the active intellect; but that in which fire is latent (viz., potentiality) is analogous to the possible intellect.¹⁰⁸ But the intellect is brought from potentiality to an actuality by means of wondering,¹⁰⁹ which moves the mind, so that it inquires as to what that which it perceives by the senses is. And for this reason¹¹⁰ the mind is in a body and a body is necessary for it. For, otherwise—i.e., if it existed in actuality as do angelic minds¹¹¹—it would not be placed in a body. For a body is given to a mind only so that the mind may be stimulated and perfected by means of perceptual wonderment. And in this way you apprehend that mind does not de-

pend on a body, although it cannot come to perfection without a body. Therefore, mind is not corrupted when the body is corrupted, although sometimes the mind is wanting in perfection because of corruption of the body. By contrast, sight fails altogether when the eye (without which sight does not see) fails. But the mind, once it has been set in actuality, measures the more precisely the more it separates itself from the body and closes off the instruments of the senses and, freeing itself from the body, contracts itself to its own spiritual and central being.

- 12 Furthermore, just as a circle measures every polygon (as eternity measures all duration), so also eternal, or infinite, rest measures all motion, and the oneness of an object measures all its potentiality. In addition, we must note that the transformations of [geometrical] figures are made with angles and by means of proportions, according as the technique is taught in the oft-mentioned *Complementa*.¹¹² Likewise, too, God Himself can be considered as the Infinite Angle,¹¹³ by means of which all transformations of things are made in accordance with an imitating proportion;¹¹⁴ for God is like an angle that is both maximal and minimal.

Let it be the case that there is a semicircle; and let us imagine that the radius which stands perpendicularly on the diameter, thus forming two right angles, is rotated continuously toward its coincidence with the diameter. It is evident that the one angle is increased more-and-more but that the other angle is only decreased.¹¹⁵ But prior to the coinciding of the radius and the diameter it will never be the case that the one angle will become absolutely maximal and, thus, will be unable to become larger; nor will the other angle become absolutely minimal and, thus, be unable to become smaller. However, if we postulate that the one angle is unqualifiedly maximal, then the other angle will be unqualifiedly minimal. But this state will not occur before the radius and the diameter coincide. Therefore, if you see that the two sides [viz., radius and diameter] are resolved into a single straight line, you see that the name "angle" no longer befits them.

From the foregoing considerations you may infer [by illustrative analogy] that he who ascends unto God, who is infinite, seems to draw near to nothing rather than to something, as says also the divine Dionysius.¹¹⁶ See, then, that God is marvelous, who the less He seems to exist, the more He does exist, and the more impossible for Him something seems to be, the more necessary it is.¹¹⁷ And see that an

infinite angle must enfold opposites and must be both maximal and minimal and cannot be an infinite, or an unqualifiedly maximal, *quantity*. And see that infinite being is altogether free of whatever can be predicated truly of finite being.¹¹⁸ But the angle which is infinite is, insofar as it is infinite, the true measure of all angles, because it is not too large a measure for anything (since it is minimal) or too small a measure for anything (since it is maximal).¹¹⁹ And so, if a geometer has the power to transform, by means of angles, curved figures into straight figures, and vice-versa, then it is in God's power to transform, by means of an infinite angle, all things into one another.

Now, only God can be the Infinite Angle.¹²⁰ Therefore, by means of Himself God works whatever He wills to, even transforming one thing into another.¹²¹ Moreover, for different transformations, it is not necessary that God have (as it is necessary that a geometer have) different angles and different instruments; instead, God transforms all things by means of a single infinite Angle. And because God *is* this Angle, and because the will of God *is* God—and so, the will of God is this unqualifiedly maximal Angle—it follows that God, by His own will alone, transforms and transmutes all things.¹²²

Moreover, that *Complementum* [of mine]¹²³ teaches [us] how to find incommensurable angles, which are as incommensurable lines. For example, the side of a square is incommensurable with its diagonal.¹²⁴ For if we postulate that one of the square's sides is as an even number, then the other side cannot be either as an even number or as an odd number.¹²⁵ Therefore, since we are unable to assign a number to the relation between all lines, we often fail in regard to chords and curves. However, because the infinite number enfolds in itself both even and odd numbers, all things are numbered by means of it. (Consider, as well, how it is that half of a double [proportion]¹²⁶ is not numberable by us and that given any number close [to that unnumberable number], a still closer number is always positable, *ad infinitum*.) Therefore, the infinite number is precise. Hence, the infinite number—which is no more even than odd and which is no more a number than not-a-number, but is an unnumberable number—numbers precisely half of a double proportion and all things. Thus, you behold the incomprehensible, infinite, and innumerable number, which is both maximal and minimal, and which reason¹²⁷ attains only in a shadow and in an obscuring mist, because it is disproportional to every numberable number. And you see that God, who is called the Number of all things, is Number without discrete quantity, just as He is great without con-

tinuous quantity. And the Infinite Angle is the same thing as the Infinite Number, so that God Himself, being most simple, most simply numbers and measures and transforms each and every thing. And when you consider these [inferences] very carefully, you will rightly see that no name whatsoever can befit God, who exists more greatly than can be thought¹²⁸—indeed, who is the Absolutely Infinite one. For just as the name “angle,” with respect to what it signifies on account of its imposed signification, cannot befit the maximal and infinite “Angle” (since that “Angle” is not-an-angle rather than an angle), so [something similar holds true] regarding all other names. For every imposition of a name is made in accordance with the name’s signifying something. But that which is something—that which is *this* and not *that*—is finite and delimited; and so, [its name] cannot at all befit the Infinite. Hence, infinite wisdom, because it is nothing but Absolute Infinity, is no more wisdom (if we pay attention to the meaning of the name) than it is not-wisdom.¹²⁹ Similarly, since infinite life is nothing but Absolute Infinity, it is no more life (with respect to the imposition of the name) than it is not-life. For it seems that when *infinity* is added to a name, *infinity* would be contracted from its own absolute [state of] infinity to the form [*ratio*] of what is supposed to be signified by the name; but this contracting cannot occur, since Absolute Infinity is not contractible to any form.¹³⁰ Moreover, although we call God wise and living and say that by means of one form He is wise and by means of another is living, nevertheless that otherness of the attributed forms cannot be seen to be present in the unqualifiedly Infinite.¹³¹ All that we experience as befitting the perfection of things-caused, we conceive as present unqualifiedly and maximally in their Cause; nevertheless, in their Cause they cannot be distinct from one another. Rather, whatever things are subsumed under any difference according to their names’ meaning, on the basis of which meaning we reason [about them]—these things are, [in their Infinite Cause], Infinity itself.¹³²

- 13** Do not become weary of taking note again and again¹³³ of the following: that there cannot be exhibited a straight line that is equal to a given circular line unless first we discover how there is exhibited a circular line that is equal to a given straight line. And then [i.e., after this discovery]: from a proportion between circular lines we arrive at a knowledge of the unknown straight line by means of both the known straight line and the known proportion between circular lines.¹³⁴

Therefore, if you propose to measure the maximal truth (which cannot exist otherwise than it does exist, i.e., cannot be either greater or lesser than it is)—propose to measure it as if it were a circular line—you will be able to do so only if you establish that some circular line is the measure of a given straight line. Therefore, given a finite straight-line, a finite circular-line will be its measure. Thus, given an infinite circular-line (which is the measure of all givable straight lines), an infinite straight-line will be the measure of the infinite circular-line. But an infinite straight-line and an infinite circular-line coincide, so that an infinite circular-line is an infinite straight-line. Therefore, at infinity, measure and measured coincide. Therefore, the infinite is not measured by the finite, between the two of which there is no comparative relation;¹³⁵ instead, the infinite is the measure of itself. Therefore, God is the Measure of Himself. And previously¹³⁶ it was evident that God is the Measure of all other things. Therefore, God is the Measure of Himself and of all other things. So God is both immeasurable and incomprehensible by any creature, because He is the Measure of Himself and of all other things.

Now, there is no measuring-standard of a measuring-standard, even as there is no boundary to a boundary.¹³⁷ Therefore, Truth, which is the Measure of things, is comprehensible only through itself. And this fact is witnessed in the coincidence of measure and measured. For with regard to all things this side of the infinite, measure and measured differ according to greater and lesser; but in God they coincide. Therefore, the coincidence of opposites is as the circumference of an infinite circle; and the difference between opposites is as the circumference of a finite polygon. Therefore, in the case of theological befigurings there is a complement to what can be known: there is, namely, the knowledge that the difference—among finite things—of measure and measured is, in God, an equality, or a coincidence. Hence, in God, infinite straightness is what measures, and the infinite circular line is what is measurable by straightness, and oneness (or the union of both [straightness and circularity]) is the actual measuring. Therefore, with regard to theological [symbolisms] the complement involves looking unto the Beginning, where those [properties] which are found to be opposed in finite objects are present in a coincidence. We cannot conceive any things to be white without their being white by virtue of whiteness; similarly, we do not conceive any things to be opposed without their being opposed by virtue of oppositeness. Therefore, oppositeness is the coincidence, and the equality, of opposites.

We say that God, who is all in all, is the Oppositeness of opposites;¹³⁸ and [to say] this is nothing else except to say that He is En-folding Beginning and Absolute Coincidence and Infinite Equality. Therefore, we transform infinite circularity into a straight line in the following way: viz., we conceive circularity to be the coincidence of beginning and end; and when we do so, we conceive circularity's rec-tilinear measure to be, not a line between a point and a point—between a beginning-point and a confined (or delimited) end-point—but a line that is free of all delimitation. But such a line that has neither begin-ning nor middle nor end measures the coincidence of beginning, mid-dle, and end by virtue of the fact that it is absolute equality in which beginning, middle, and end are not different but are one and the same thing in equal measure. Moreover, all the things which in finite cir-cles exist differently from one another and which are different and opposed (e.g., the eastward part is opposed to the westward part; and the southern part is opposed to the northern part; and each part is op-posed to that other part which is separated from it by the length of a diameter; and the center, the radius, and the circumference are differ-ent; and so on) coincide in the equality of an infinite circle. In a sim-ilar way, all the things which in straight lines exist differently from one another coincide in the equality of the infinite straight-line. And because the infinite circular-line is straight, the infinite straight-line is the true measure that measures the infinite circular-line. And for this reason the infinite straight-line is the equality, or coincidence, of all the things that, in the finite [domain], are seen to exist otherwise and differently and oppositely. And this [conclusion] is the theological complement through which everything theologically knowable is at-tainable—I mean everything knowable in the best way in which it can be humanly known in this world.

- 14 Now, all things hitherto hidden to the theologian and unknown by all investigators can in the aforesaid manner be known (in the way in which they are knowable to man) by means of the circularizing of a square. For example, when God is called *theos* because of His *see-ing*,¹³⁹ and when we ask in what way He sees, the answer is: in the way in which He measures. For an infinite circle encompasses all modes of speaking, and the whole of theology is as the [infinite] cir-cle,¹⁴⁰ in which all things are one. Therefore, in God, seeing is not anything other than measuring.¹⁴¹ Accordingly, just as God is the Measure of Himself and of each and every thing, so He is the vision

[of Himself and of each and every thing]. But, in God, vision and seeing are the same thing. Therefore, for God to be the vision of all things¹⁴² is for Him to see all things. If one asks whether God exists in one mode in seeing Himself and in another mode in seeing creatures, the answer is: identity, not otherness, befits Infinite Equality, which is the Measure of things. Therefore, simultaneously with seeing Himself God sees also all created things; He does not at all see Himself and other things in different ways. And simultaneously with seeing created things He sees also Himself.¹⁴³ For created things, because they are created, are not seen perfectly unless their Creator is seen.¹⁴⁴ Likewise, an effect, because it is an effect, is not seen perfectly unless also its cause is seen. Now, God's vision is most perfect. And since He is Cause: in seeing Himself He sees all things caused.¹⁴⁵ And since they are caused: in seeing them God sees Himself, since He is their Cause. In God, measuring and being measured coincide, because He is both the Measuring-standard and What-is-measured. Similarly, [in Him], seeing and being-seen coincide; and, likewise, His seeing Himself is His being seen by Himself, and His seeing creatures is His being seen [by Himself] in creatures.¹⁴⁶

[One can answer] in the same way, if he is asked about creating; for, in God, creating is seeing. Creating, seeing, understanding, willing, measuring, making, working, and all other such [acts] which we ascribe to God are to be construed as being like the names of an infinite circle. Hence, it is no more absurd to say that God creates Himself and all other things than [it is to say that] God sees Himself and all other things.¹⁴⁷ And [it is no more absurd to say] that His creating all things is His being created [by Himself] in all things [than it is to say that His seeing all things is His being seen by Himself in all things]. But since human names are imposed on finite things, they do not befit the Divinity. For just as a circular finite-line is called circular with respect to its difference from a finite straight-line, so we also call an infinite circular-line circular. Nevertheless, [we do not call it circular] in conformity to the intent of the one who instituted the name "circular";¹⁴⁸ for [an infinite circular-line] is not circular, since it does not differ from an [infinite] straight-line. A similar conclusion holds regarding all [names applied to what is infinite]. Therefore, you need not be troubled about the meaning of a name; but you do need to see the coincidence and supreme equality and supreme simplicity of the infinite circle, with respect to which all names are one name. And thereupon,¹⁴⁹ that which seems absurd becomes acceptable by virtue

of a difference of meaning (*vocabulum*). This meaning, which as it relates to us is discrepant, is, as it relates to God, not discrepant but captive of the reality.

This has been a brief exposition—unto the praise of God, who is forever blessed—of the complementary theological considerations that are befigured in my *De Mathematicis Complementis*.¹⁵⁰

ABBREVIATIONS

- Ap.* *Apologia Doctae Ignorantiae* [Vol. II (edited by Raymond Klibansky) of *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Leipzig/Hamburg: F. Meiner Verlag, 1932)].
- CA* *Cribratio Alkorani* [Vol. VIII (edited by Ludwig Hagemann) of *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Hamburg: F. Meiner Verlag, 1986)].
- DB* *De Beryllo* [Vol. XI, 1 (edited by Hans G. Senger and Karl Bormann) of *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Hamburg: F. Meiner Verlag, 1988)].
- DC* *De Coniecturis* [Vol. III (edited by Josef Koch and Karl Bormann) of *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Hamburg: F. Meiner Verlag, 1972)].
- DI* *De Docta Ignorantia* [Latin-German edition: *Schriften des Nikolaus von Kues in deutscher Übersetzung*, published by F. Meiner Verlag. Book I (Vol. 264a), edited and translated by Paul Wilpert; 3rd edition with minor improvements by Hans G. Senger, 1979. Book II (Vol. 264b), edited and translated by Paul Wilpert; 2nd edition with minor improvements by Hans G. Senger, 1977. Book III (Vol. 264c); Latin text edited by Raymond Klibansky; introduction and translation by Hans G. Senger, 1977].
- DM* *Idiota de Mente* [Latin text contained in J. Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa on Wisdom and Knowledge* (Minneapolis: Banning, 1996)].
- DP* *De Possess* [Latin text as contained in J. Hopkins, *A Concise Introduction to the Philosophy of Nicholas of Cusa* (Minneapolis: Banning, 3rd ed. 1986)].
- DVD* *De Visione Dei* [Latin text as contained in J. Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa's Dialectical Mysticism: Text, Translation, and Interpretive Study of De Visione Dei* (Minneapolis: Banning, 2nd ed. 1988)].
- MFCG* *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft*, edited by Klaus Kremer and Klaus Reinhardt. A continuing series. Volumes I-XVII published in Mainz, Germany by Matthias-Grünwald Verlag. Volumes XVIII and higher published in Trier by Paulinus-Verlag.
- NA* *De Li Non Aliud* [Latin text as contained in J. Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa on God as Not-other: A Translation and an Appraisal of De Li Non Aliud* (Minneapolis: Banning, 3rd ed. 1987)].
- PG* *Patrologia Graeca*, edited by J.-P. Migne. Series published in Paris.
- PL* *Patrologia Latina*, edited by J.-P. Migne. Series published in Paris.
- SCG* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles* [in Vol. II, edited by R. Busa (1980), of *Index Thomisticus. Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia*. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog Verlag].

- ST Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* [in Vol. II (1980) of *Index Thomisticus*, *ibid.*].
- VS *De Venatione Sapientiae* [Vol. XII (edited by Raymond Klibansky and Hans G. Senger) of *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Hamburg: F. Meiner Verlag, 1982)].

PRAENOTANDA

1. (a) In the English translations brackets are used to indicate words supplied by the translator to complete the meaning of a Latin phrase, clause, or sentence. (b) When a clarifying Latin word is inserted into the translation, brackets (rather than parentheses) are used if the case ending or the verb-form has been modified.
2. All references to Nicholas of Cusa's works are to the Latin texts in the following editions (unless explicitly indicated otherwise):
 - A. Heidelberg Academy edition of *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Felix Meiner Verlag: Hamburg): *De Concordantia Catholica*; *De Coniecturis*; *De Deo Abscondito*; *De Quaerendo Deum*; *De Filiatione Dei*; *De Dato Patris Luminum*; *Coniectura de Ultimis Diebus*; *De Genesi*; *Apologia Doctae Ignorantiae*; *De Pace Fidei*; *De Beryllo* (1988 edition); *Cribratio Alkorani*; *De Principio*; *De Theologicis Complementis*; *De Venatione Sapientiae*; *De Apice Theoriae*.; *Sermones* (Haubst's numbering of the sermons is given in roman numerals; Koch's numbering is given in arabic numerals.)
 - B. Texts authorized by the Heidelberg Academy and published in the Latin-German editions of Felix Meiner Verlag's series *Philosophische Bibliothek*: *De Docta Ignorantia*.
 - C. Editions by J. Hopkins: *De Aequalitate* (1998); *Idiotae de Sapientia, de Mente, de Staticis Experimentis* (1996); *De Visione Dei* (1988); *De Possess* (1986); *De Li Non Aliud* (1987); *Compendium* (1996). Except in the case of *De Aequalitate*, the left-hand margin numbers correspond to the margin numbers in the Heidelberg Academy editions; line numbers and some paragraph-breaks differ.
 - D. Paris edition of the *Opera Omnia Cusani* (1514): *De Ludo Globi*.

The references given for some of these treatises indicate book and chapter, for others margin number and line, and for still others page and line. Readers should have no difficulty determining which is which when they consult the particular Latin text. E.g., 'DI II, 6 (125:19-20)' indicates *De Docta Ignorantia*, Book II, Chapter 6, margin number 125, lines 19-20 of the edition in the series *Philosophische Bibliothek* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag).
3. The folio numbers in the right-hand margin of the Latin text of *De Aequalitate* correspond to the folios in Codex Latinus Vaticanus 1245.
4. References to the Bible are given in terms of the Douay version. References to

chapters and verses of the Psalms include, in parentheses, the King James' locations.

5. Italics are used sparingly, so that, as a rule, foreign expressions are italicized only when they are short. All translations are mine unless otherwise specifically indicated.

6. Citations of Nicholas's sermons are given in terms of the sermon numbers assigned by Rudolf Haubst in fascicle 0 [=zero], Vol. XVI of *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Hamburg: F. Meiner Verlag, 1991).

NOTES TO *DE THEOLOGICIS COMPLEMENTIS*

1. This work was completed in September of 1453 in Castle Branzoll ob Klausen, situated in the diocese of Brixen, Austria (today Italy). It was meant to be appended to *De Mathematicis Complementis*, written just before the present work and written at the same location.

See the maps at the front and the back of Wilhelm Baum's *Nikolaus Cusanus in Tirol. Das Wirken des Philosophen und Reformators als Fürstbischof von Brixen* (Bolzano: Athesia, 1983). See also Nicholas of Cusa's letter of September 14, 1453 to Caspar Aindorffer, printed in Edmond Vansteenberghe's *Autour de la Docte Ignorance. Une controverse sur la Théologie mystique au XV^e siècle* [Vol. 14 of *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1915). See p. 116.]. See n. 132 below.

2. *On Complementary Mathematical Considerations* has been translated from Latin into German by Josepha Hofmann. See Nikolaus von Kues, *Die mathematischen Schriften*, translated by J. Hofmann (Hamburg: Meiner, 1980, 2nd ed.), pp. 68-127. The translation is of Nicholas's later version (November, 1454 at Brixen), which adds a second book to the original version of 1453.

3. Pope Nicholas V (Thomas Parentucelli), 1397-1455, was elevated in 1447 from Bishop of Bologna to Supreme Pontif of the Universal Church.

4. *Ap.* 4:12. *VS* 33 (97:14-16). *DB* 72:1-3. Plato, *Epistola* VII (341C-D).

5. *DI* I, 11-12. *DP* 43:7 - 44:6. *DP* 61:9-10.

6. Later in the present treatise (viz., at 10:58-60) Nicholas explicitly distinguishes between number "insofar as it is from the oneness of the Uncreated Mind and insofar as it is from a created mind." In *DM* 6 (88:14-22) he writes, speaking through the Layman: "I deem the Pythagoreans—who, as you state, philosophize about all things by means of number—to be serious and keen [philosophers]. It is not the case that I think they meant to be speaking of number qua mathematical number and qua number proceeding from our mind. (For it is self-evident that that [sort of number] is not the beginning of anything.) Rather, they were speaking symbolically and plausibly about number that proceeds from the Divine Mind—of which number a mathematical number is an image. For just as our mind is to the Infinite, Eternal Mind, so number [that proceeds] from our mind is to number [that proceeds from the Divine Mind]." See *DP* 43:7 - 44:6 and *DP* 50:4-6.

7. "... in the one ... in the other": i.e., the triangular pattern in the floor as compared with the triangular pattern in the wall. Cf. *DP* 60. Note *DI* II, 5 (119:11): "A line cannot exist actually except in a material object"

8. That is, the mind is *other* than whatever is not-mind, not-mental.

9. According to Platonic optics seeing occurs in the human being when an inner, invisible ray that passes outward through the eye meets with a resistant object in the presence of outer light (such as sunlight or candlelight). One who lacks such an inner ray is blind. Certain animals, such as the wolf and the night-owl, were thought to possess an inner ray of special power, so that they could see in great dimness, though not in pitch darkness. Note Plato *Sophist* 266B-C and *Timaeus* 46A-B. Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litteram* 12.16.32 (PL 34: 466). St. Anselm, *De Libertate Arbitrii* 7. Consider the pictorial German word “(das) Augenlicht,” meaning *sight*.

10. *DB* 71:17-19: “... no knowledge is possible with respect to that which is simpler than the cognizer. For to know is to measure. But a measure is simpler than the things measurable [by it]...”

11. In *De Filiatione Dei* 3 (67:13-14) the *speculum veritatis* (mirror of truth) is identified as the second member of the Trinity. However, in the present context the expression “mirror-of-truth” (“*speculum veritatis*”) does not indicate a person of God. Cf. the mirror symbolism used in *DVD* 15 (67). See also *DVD* 12 (49). Note also *NA* 20 (92:14-18).

12. *De Filiatione Dei* 6 (87). Cf. *DM* 5 (81). *DVD* 22 (97:15-16).

13. Here at *De Theologicis Complementis* 2:61 I am reading “*ipsam*” (as does the Paris edition), instead of “*ipsum*”.

14. “... mental viewing, or speculation”: this appositive expression renders the single Latin expression “*speculatio ... mentis*”.

15. “... these two”: viz., faith and seeing (or, *that it is* and *what it is*).

16. Where beginning and end coincide, there too coincide faith and seeing. Regarding *quod* (that) and *quid* (what), see *Sermo* IV, 3 (32:13-16 and 32:26-28). *Sermo* VIII, 1 (19:11-14). *De Aequalitate* 18.

17. “Polygonia enim aequalium laterum et inscribitur circulo et circumscibitur circulo; et alia est peripheria circuli circumscripti, alia inscripti, alia polygoniae.” In contrast to English idiom, Nicholas’s idiom makes use of the dative: “*inscribitur circulo*” (is inscribed in a circle”) and “*circumscibitur circulo*” (“circumscribes a circle”). Literally, this Latin sentence would read, in English: “In particular, a polygon of equal sides both is inscribed to a circle and is circumscribed to a circle; the circumference of the circle circumscribed [to the polygon], that of the circle inscribed [to the polygon], and that of the polygon are different.” There is a reversal of viewpoint within the sentence. Regarding this terminology, compare the annotation in the Paris edition, Vol. II, 2nd half, f. 60^v, lines 4 and 5.

18. Nicholas is hypothesizing that there are three isocircumferential, or isoperimetrical, circles that coincide—so that the initial circle, the circle inscribed in the initial circle, and the circle circumscribing the initial circle all have exactly the same circumference (since a mathematical line takes up no space). Accordingly, they are indistinguishable from a single circle.

19. See n. 18 above. Two or more circles (*circuli*) are “isocircumferential,” or “isoperimetrical” (“*isoperimetri*”), if each of them has a circumference equal to that of the other(s). Two or more polygons are isocircumferential if the length and number of the one’s sides, and the length of its circumference, are equal to those parameters in the other polygon(s). See Nicholas’s *De Mathematicis Complementis*, Paris ed., Vol. II, 2nd half, f. 60^f, lines 8-11 Cf. *De mathematischen Schriften* (cited in n. 2 above), p. 73, lines 1-5.

20. Nicholas's method throughout this work is to use mathematical symbols to illustrate theological truths. The method is not limited to mathematical symbols or to the treatise *De Theologicis Complementis*. Indeed, he follows this same method in *DI I*. Note also what he says about his illustration, in *DVD*, of the omnivoyant image: "... that which is apparent in the case of that image must undoubtedly be present in an excellent way in Absolute Sight" [*DVD 1 (7:4-6)*].

21. *DI I*, 13 (35) and *I*, 16 (45:1-2). *De Theologicis Complementis* 7:1-25.

22. *DI I*, 21 (64:6-7). Cf. the illustration of the top that spins with infinite velocity. *DP* 18 and 19.

23. *DI I*, 14 (37:10-13). *DI I*, 15 (40:21-22). *VS* 26 (76:6-9).

24. *DI I*, 13-16. *De Theologicis Complementis* 3:69-70.

25. *De Theologicis Complementis* 5:7-8 and 9:49-50. The infinite circle is of infinite angles, so to speak, and is therefore also of "infinite sides." An infinite circle coincides with all infinite polygons, teaches Nicholas. However, Nicholas also teaches that a finite circle is of infinite angles.

26. See n. 18 and n. 19 above.

27. God, maintains Nicholas, is the true Measure of all things. *DI I*, 20 (61:20-21). *DVD* 6 (19:13-14). *DVD* 13 (59:2). *DB* 12:1-2. *DP* 13:10-12. *NA* 5 (16:1-6).

28. God, because He is infinite, is not in the same order of comparison with finite beings, maintains Nicholas. All comparisons between God and creatures are metaphorical. See *De Theologicis Complementis* 14:22-38.

29. Finite objects have their own respective forms. God is the Form of their forms. See the references in n. 135 of Notes to *De Beryllo*.

30. The theme of God's being the Actuality of all potentiality is developed at length in *DP*.

31. Here is the core statement of Nicholas's method in this present work. Cf. n. 20 above. See the passage marked by n. 46 below.

32. *DI II*, 3. See, below, n. 81 of Notes to *De Beryllo*.

33. The so-called attempt to square the circle involved the effort to construct—in a finite number of steps and using only a pair of drawing-compasses, an unmarked straightedge, and Euclidean techniques—a square of equivalent area to the area of a given circle. This task is now known to be impossible, because π is a transcendental number and because the only lengths that are constructible by the aforementioned prescriptions are those that are algebraic.

34. As Nicholas conceives of equality, there are *degrees* of being equal. See, below, n. 202 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*, as well as the treatise *De Aequalitate*.

35. See *DI I*, 3 (10) regarding equality and identity. Note also *DI III*, 1 (188:15-20): "Similarly, a square inscribed in a circle passes—with respect to the size of the circumscribing circle—from being a square which is smaller than the circle to being a square larger than the circle, without ever arriving at its equal. And an angle of incidence increases from being lesser than a right angle to being greater than a right angle without reaching the middle-point of equality."

36. *VS* 15-17.

37. Here Nicholas is tacitly distinguishing between the role of reason (*ratio*) and the role of intellect (*intellectus*). Only the intellect, which is a higher power than is reason, accommodates the doctrine of *coincidentia oppositorum in deo*. *Ap.* 15.

See also Hermann Schnarr, *Modi essendi. Interpretationen zu den Schriften De docta ignorantia, De coniecturis und De venatione sapientiae von Nikolaus von Kues* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973).

38. According to Nicholas polygonal figures as they inform material objects or as they are drawn (e.g., on paper) are never precisely equal to one another. However, insofar as they are conceived of as abstract entities they may be precisely equal; otherwise, mathematics would be inexact. *DI I*, 17 (49) is not at variance with this interpretation. Cf. *DI II*, 6 (125:14-19). See also *DP* 60-61. At the end of *DP* 60 Nicholas is speaking of the infinite circle, though he does not use the word “infinite”. It is the infinite circle that is a suitable symbolism of theological truths. See n. 140 below.

39. Cf. *DM* 10 (127:3-4): “A part is not known unless the whole is known, for the whole measures the part.” *DM* 3 (69:12-14): “... if someone had precise knowledge of one thing: then, necessarily, he would have knowledge of all things.” *DP* 38:13-14: “For what is caused cannot know itself if its Cause remains unknown.” *De Theologicis Complementis* 14:16-17: “Likewise, an effect, because it is an effect, is not seen perfectly unless also its cause is seen.”

These themes, when developed further by others, became foundational for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German Idealism.

40. *DVD* 13 (58:9-12). See the text marked by n. 129 below.

41. See the references in n. 32 above.

42. See n. 25 above.

43. The reader must beware of confounding the notion of enfolding with the notion of coinciding. Both a finite circle and the infinite circle enfold within themselves all polygonal figures (though in different ways). However, only in the infinite circle do all (infinite) geometrical figures coincide with one another and with the infinite circle.

44. *De Theologicis Complementis* 5:6-8: “the more angles a polygon of equal sides has, the more it resembles a circle”

45. Note *De Theologicis Complementis* 7:23-24: “For infinite straightness, on account of its infinity, is omnipotent and creative.”

46. See n. 31 above.

47. Nicholas’s text here at 5:25-33 is syntactically jumbled. I do not consider “quod” at 5:32 to be governed by “intuetur” at 5:25. Rather, at 5:32, I am taking “quod ad” as “quoad”.

With regard to the last idea expressed in this passage, cf. *DVD* 12 (50:15-16).

48. Nicholas’s text is here corrupt. (Cf. n. 47 above.) I have supplied the bracketed words that I believe express his meaning. Even apart from the usual manuscript problems, other problems arise because of the fact that Nicholas tended to write hurriedly and to correct hurriedly. See, below, n. 1, paragraph 2 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*. Note Nicholas’s own admission that *De Filiatione Dei* was written cursorily [*De Fil. Dei* 6 (90:1)]. See Raymond Klibansky’s comments, about Nicholas’s mistakes, in Klibansky’s “Zur Geschichte der Überlieferung der *Docta ignorantia* des Nikolaus von Kues,” found at the end of Book III of the Latin-German edition of *Nicolai de Cusa De docta ignorantia. Die belehrte Unwissenheit* [Philosophische Bibliothek (Hamburg: Meiner, 1977). See p. 216.].

49. Regarding the expression “equality-of-being,” see especially *DI I*, 8 (22).

50. *De Theologicis Complementis* 3:43-49. Note also *DI I*, 21 (64).

51. "... that [mathematical] equality is only eternity": Nicholas regards mathematical truths and relations to be timeless expressions of the Divine Mind. See n. 6 above, as well as the passage marked by n. 58 below. Cf. *DI* I, 21 (64:1-2).

52. *CA* II, 4.

53. This present English paragraph (corresponding to the Latin text at 6:26-43) concerns God. "Being," "Equality," and "Union" are names for the members of the Trinity. Nicholas's transitions from his mathematical symbolisms to what is theologically symbolized are oftentimes—as also in the Latin lines corresponding to the English sentence marked by this note—not clearly made.

54. *DI* I, 8 and I, 9.

55. *DI* II, 2 (104). *De Dato Patris Luminum* 2 (99). *Sermo* XXII, 1 (15:12-17). Cf. *VS* 7 (18:14-15).

56. See the passage, in *De Theologicis Complementis*, marked by n. 21 above.

57. Here at 7:10 I am reading "*Curvitas*" (as do most manuscripts) in place of "*Curvitatit*".

58. See n. 51 above. *Sermo* CXXVIII (=121), margin number 9.

59. See, below, the last sentence of n. 224 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*.

60. This similarity is only metaphorical, since between the infinite and the finite there is no comparative relation. Moreover, an infinite line does not exist actually (*Ap.* 32. See n. 7 above.). The only existent infinity is God Himself. And of the Divine Infinity no humanly conceivable property can properly be predicated. See the reference in n. 40 above. See also *DVD* 15 (65:21 - 66:2) and *DVD* 23 (100:7). See n. 85 below.

61. The form of forms here refers to the infinite circle. See, above, *De Theologicis Complementis*, 5:27-30. The infinite circle symbolizes God, who is also referred to as the Form of forms. *DI* I, 23 (70:23-24). *De Theologicis Complementis* 3:74. *Ap.* 26. *De Dato Patris Luminum* 2 (98:12-14). *DP* 13. Cf. *DI* II, 9 (148:8-10).

62. The exemplar of a circle is the infinite circle, which is a straight line, because at infinity opposites coincide. See the text marked by n. 56 above.

63. *DVD* 24 (105:12-18).

64. This circle is conceived of as perfectly round. As circular objects exist in reality, no one of them is exactly round, teaches Nicholas. *VS* 5 (11:8-15).

65. Nicholas is thinking of the cycles of day and night, the seasons, the apparent revolution of the sun, the revolving movement of the heavens.

66. *VS* 9 (26:6-7). Aristotle, *Physics* IV, 11 (219^b1-3).

67. See, below, the references in n. 71 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*.

68. *DI* II, 12 (164:2-4).

69. And so, means Nicholas, if we can number them all, then they are not an actually infinite number, which, in principle, is uncountable except by God.

70. That is, the eternal is altogether free of temporality.

71. *De Theologicis Complementis* 6:26-42.

72. "*Capacitas*" signifies capacity, capability, power. In some contexts I translate it appositively: "capacity, or capability." Note especially 9:21-22: "Vide igitur quomodo forma trigoni ... habet suam *virtutem*, quae est eius *capacitas* trigonica ..." (my emphasis).

73. See n. 18 and n. 19 above.

74. We must remember that, for Nicholas, “equality” does not mean *precise equality*, except in reference to God. The area of a circle will always be slightly greater than the area of a polygon of “equal” circumference, maintains Nicholas, because a circle has no angles (or, put otherwise, has an infinite number of angles).

75. Cf. the mathematical symbolism at *De Theologicis Complementis* 7:23-24. See the second sentence of n. 53 above. An infinite circle—not a finite, isocircumferential circle—is the form of forms. See *De Theologicis Complementis* 5:29-30.

76. I am repunctuating, as follows, the Latin text at 9:23-28: “Ex quo habes nullam formam sine propria virtute. Et quia ex numero angulorum nominantur polygoniae (ut sit trigona, quae tres angulos, et tetragona, quae quattuor, et ita in infinitum), id autem quod dat nomen sive discretionem, forma est: numerus igitur forma. Omnis autem numerus ab uno est, in quo complicatur.”

77. *DI* I, 5 (14:1-4). *DI* II, 3 (105:14-16). *Ap.* 16:24 - 17:2. *Ap.* 17:26 - 18:3. *De Deo Abscondito* 5:4. *De Sapientia* I (5:20 - 6:8). *DM* 9 (121:1-3).

78. See n. 6 above.

79. See n. 51 above.

80. Aquinas, *Expositio in VIII. Libros Physicorum* V.5 [p. 391^a of Vol. 18 of *Sancti Thomae ... Opera Omnia* (reprint of the Parma edition, 1865), New York: Musurgia Publishers, 1949]. Anselm of Canterbury, *De Incarnatione Verbi* 15.

81. *DI* II, 2 (100:3-6): “For it seems that the creation, which is neither God nor nothing, is, as it were, after God and before nothing and in between God and nothing—as one of the sages says: ‘God is the oppositeness to nothing by the intermediacy of being.’”

82. “... *unus trigonus*” (“a trigon”): In Latin the numerical adjective “*unus*, -*a*, -*um*” sometimes substitutes for the indefinite article, which the language lacks.

83. A circle finite in extent is infinite only in terms of its number of angles, so to speak. Cf. n. 25 above.

84. Nicholas does not always refer to his works by exactly the same title. *De Visione Dei* is also called by him both “*De Visu Dei*” and “*De Icona*” [*De Apice Theoriae* 16]. And *De Dato Patris Luminum* is called “*De Dato Lumine*” [*De Apice Theoriae* 16 and *Ap.* 17]. Likewise, *De Ludo Globi* is cited as “*De Globo*” [*Compendium* 12 (37:13)]. Similarly, *De Mathematicis Complementis* is presently referred to (singularly) as “*Complementum Mathematicae*,” (“*in libello complementi mathematicae*”), just as at 11:4 it is mentioned by the words “*in saepe dicto libello complementi*.”

85. Again, this degree of similarity is only metaphorical. For as Nicholas repeatedly makes clear, there is no comparative relation between the infinite and the finite. See n. 60 above. See also such passages as *DI* I, 3 (9:4-5). *De Circuli Quadratura* (excerpt appended to the Heidelberg Academy edition of the Latin text of *De Theologicis Complementis*), lines 116-117 (on p. 92). *Sermo* IV, 3 (34:39-40). See n. 114 below.

86. Celestial minds are angelic minds. *DM* 14 (154:1-4).

87. *De Sapientia* I (26:1-5).

88. *DM* 9 (124:4 - 125:3).

89. See n. 74 above, as well as the text that it marks.

90. *De Filiatione Dei* 6 (87-88) and elsewhere in that treatise. Note also *DVD* 16 (74:3-4): “Lord my God, I see You by means of a certain mental rapture.” Cf. Aquinas, *ST* I.58.2c: “... sicut et in patria non erunt volubiles nostrae cogitationes,

ab aliis in alia euntes atque redeuntes, sed omnem scientiam nostram simul uno conspectu videbimus ...” [Vol. II of *S. Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia*, ed. by R. Busa (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann, 1980)].

91. See the references in n. 21 above, as well as the text marked by n. 21.

92. E.g., the genus *animal* is present in the species *man*. Nicholas uses the example of trigon and tetragon (triangle and quadrangle) only to *illustrate* the relationship between genus and species, not in order to suggest that geometrical figures are genera and species.

93. The vegetative soul is present in the sensitive soul, which is present in the rational soul. Cf. *DM* 5 (80:14-18).

94. “... which is specific”: i.e., which concerns species (not genera).

95. *DI* II, 3 (105:14-15): “... in number, which is the unfolding of oneness, we find only oneness ...” *DM* 6 (90:1-3): “Number is a composite and is composed of itself. For every number is composed of even number and odd number.” *DM* 6 (91:1-4): “Indeed, when I behold in number only oneness, I see the number’s *in-composite compositeness*, and I see a coincidence of simplicity and compositeness, or of oneness and multitude.” See the further details in *DM* 6.

96. See n. 6 above.

97. Here, as elsewhere, Nicholas teaches that real objects have natural, substantial forms of their own. He calls God the Form of these forms, because God is the Supreme Form-er, or Creator. Cf. *De Dato Patris Luminum* 2 (98). See, below, n. 135 of Notes to *De Beryllo*. Cf. *DVD* 15 (67).

98. Cf. the beginning of section 13.

99. *De Mathematicis Complementis*, Paris ed., Vol. II (2nd half), f. 67^r. See also the German translation mentioned in n. 2 above. (In its margins are the Paris edition’s folio numbers.)

100. See n. 33 above.

101. *DI* I, 18 (53:1-2).

102. *DI* III, 1 (184:10-12).

103. “... operates in an opposite way”: i.e., operates not analogously to a line’s extending itself but analogously to a line’s contracting itself. As for a unified power’s being a greater power, Nicholas repeats this point at *DVD* 14 (64:4-5) and *Compendium* 10 (30:9). Cf. *DB* 20:11-12.

104. “*Pertica*” is the Roman name for a rod used to measure tracts of land.

105. “... the actuality”: Nicholas uses the Latin equivalent (“*entelechia*”) of the Aristotelian term ἐντελέχεια.

106. Cf. the illustration of the candles in *DM* 12 (143-144), as well as the illustration of the wine glass and that of the cithara in *DM* 13 (150). See also *DM* 15 (158:5-8). In *DM* 7 (103:6-7) Nicholas speaks of the mind as using itself as its own instrument.

107. This is a motion that sets something afire.

108. On the active and the possible intellect see Thomas Aquinas, *SCG* II.76.2-4. On the distinction between the passive intellect and the possible intellect see *SCG* II.60 [Vol. II of *S. Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia*, *op. cit.* (n. 90 above)].

109. Regarding *admiratio* (wondering, marveling) see *DI* I, Preface (1:15-18). *DM* 1 (51:16-17). *VS* 15 (45:2-7). Aristotle, *Metaphysica* I, 2 (982^b12): τὸ θαυμάζειν.

110. “... for this reason”: viz., in order to become actualized. *DVD* 22 (97:15-

16). *De Filiatione Dei* 6 (87). *DM* 5 (81).

111. Angelic minds need no body in order to become actualized. This theological doctrine does not entail—not for Nicholas any more than for Thomas—that angelic minds never learn anything. Nor does it entail the falsity of the doctrine that God alone is pure actuality. See Aquinas, *SCG* II.101 (Busa edition, *op. cit.*, n. 90 above). *ST* I.54.2c. *ST* I.55.2c. *ST* I.58.2c. Cf. n. 90 above.

112. That is, *De Mathematicis Complementis*. See n. 84 above.

113. *DVD* 8 (32:15-18).

114. Things are said by Nicholas to be in God's image and to be like God and to imitate God. This language is, for Nicholas, symbolical. See n. 60 and n. 85 above, as well as n. 118 below. *Ap.* 24:19-22. *Ap.* 32:7-8. Note also *DP* 10:15, where Nicholas uses the expression "disproportional likeness" ("*similitudo impropotionalis*").

115. *DB* 10.

116. *Ap.* 20. The exact sentence alluded to by Nicholas seems nowhere to be found in Pseudo-Dionysius. The passage agrees more closely with Thierry of Chartres, *Commentarius in Librum Boetii de Trinitate* IV, 28, lines 35-36 [in Nikolaus Häring, editor, *Commentaries on Boethius by Thierry of Chartres and His School* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1971), pp. 195-196]. See also Cusa, *DI* I, 17 (51:11-12) and *De Deo Abscondito* 11.

117. *DVD* 9 (39).

118. *DI* I, 1 (3:2-3). *DI* I, 3 (9:4-5). *DI* II, 2 (102:4-5). *Ap.* 32:7-8. *DVD* 23 (100:7). See n. 85 and n. 114 above.

119. *DVD* 6 (19:13-20). *DI* I, 16 (45:9-18). *DI* I, 20 (61:20-21). *DI* I, 23 (72:1-8). *DP* 13:11-12.

120. See n. 113 above.

121. *DP* 8:11-16.

122. Here I have significantly repunctuated the edited Latin text.

123. That is, *De Mathematicis Complementis*. See n. 84 above.

124. *De Coniecturis* II, 1 (76:10-20). *DM* 6 (91:8-11). *DP* 42. Aristotle, *Metaphysica* X, 1 (1053^a14-18). Albertus Magnus, *Metaphysica* X, 1, 5 [p. 436, lines 40-54 in *Alberti Magni Opera Omnia*, Vol. XVI, Part 2 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1964), edited by B. Geyer].

125. See n. 76:3 on p. 223 of *Nicolai de Cusa De coniecturis. Mutmaßungen*, translated into German by Josef Koch and Winfried Happ (Hamburg: Meiner, 1971).

126. "... half of a double [proportion]: "*medietas duplae*": the reference is to the square-root of two.

By "*medietas duplae*" Nicholas here (12:49) means what he also means a few lines later (12:54), where he writes "*medietas duplae proportionis*": "half of a double proportion." Nicholas is partly influenced by Boethius's *De Arithmetica* and *De Musica*. Boethius defines "*proportio*" as "a comparative relation of two terms [i.e., of two numbers] to each other." And he defines "*proportionalitas*" ("proportionality") in such a way that it consists, in the simplest case, of three terms such that "the first term has to the second term the same *proportion* as does the second to the third" [*De Musica* II, 12 (*PL* 63:1205)]. He goes on to distinguish three kinds of middle-term [*terminus medius*, or *medietas*, or *medius numerus*] that may occur in a simple proportionality: viz., arithmetical middle-term, geometrical middle-term, and harmonic mid-

dle-term. An arithmetical middle-term, or arithmetical mean, is one such that the increment between it and the lesser term is equal to the increment between it and the greater term—but where there is no equal proportion. (In the series “1, 2, 3” 2 is an arithmetical middle-term. 2 differs from 1 by one and from 3 by one, so that there is an equal increment, or difference. But 2 is twice 1, whereas 3 is 1 1/2 times as much as 2, so that the proportions are not equal.) A geometric middle-term, or geometric mean, is such that the proportion of the middle-term to the first term is equal to the proportion of the third term to the middle term—but where there is no equality of increments. (In the series “1, 2, 4” 2 is twice 1, just as 4 is twice 2; however, the increment between 1 and 2 is one, whereas the increment between 2 and 4 is two.) A harmonic middle-term, or harmonic mean, is something still other. (See *De Musica* II, 12). Boethius summarizes and generalizes the difference between an arithmetical middle-term and a geometric middle-term as follows: “That middle-term with respect to which the *differences* are equal is called an arithmetical middle-term. But that middle-term with respect to which the *proportions* are equal is called a geometric middle-term” (PL 63:1205D). Terms in a continuous progression differ *arithmetically* when the difference between them is describable by way of the addition (or subtraction) of the same sum from each of them. Terms in a continuous progression differ *geometrically* when the difference between them is describable by way of the same multiplier (or divider). Boethius distinguishes continuous arithmetical proportionalities from disjunctive arithmetical proportionalities; likewise, he distinguishes continuous from disjunctive geometrical proportionalities. In doing so, he allows for more than one middle-term. (The middle-terms are all those that occur between the two extremes of beginning-term and end-term.) See also *De Arithmetica* II, 43-44 (PL 63:1147-1152) and II, 53 (PL 63: 1165D). [Cf. the Latin text in G. Friedlein’s edition (Leipzig: Teubner, 1867). See also Michael Masi, *Boethian Number Theory: A Translation of the De Institutione Arithmetica* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1983)].

A double proportion (*dupla proportio*), according to Boethius, is the comparative relation that exists between two numbers—say, between 2 and 4, or between 4 and 8, or between 8 and 16, etc.—such that the one number is twice the other.

Now, when Nicholas speaks of *medietas duplae proportionis* in *De Theologicis Complementis*, and of *medietas duplae* in *DM* 6 (91:8), he means by “*medietas*” not *middle-term* but *half*; and by “*dupla, -ae*” he means “double proportion” not in the sense of “times 2” but in the sense of “the double of itself.” His context is the context of the relation between the side of a square and its diagonal. He has in mind the ancients’ puzzling over irrational numbers. Take a square the length of whose respective sides is one unit. Then in accordance with the Pythagorean theorem the square’s diagonal (which is the hypotenuse of a right triangle) will be: $d^2=2a^2$ (where “d” stands for the length of the diagonal). In the present instance, $d^2=2 \times 1^2=2$. Hence $d=\sqrt{2}$. But the square-root of two is an irrational number. And the ancients did not know what to make of such numbers.

In the passage above, Nicholas says: “Et considera quomodo medieta duplae non est per nos numerabilis ...”: “Consider, as well, how it is that half of a double [proportion] is not numerable by us ...” That is (in the context of squares and of square numbers and of the ancients’ puzzles): “Reflect on how it is that the double proportion 2:1 (reducible simply to 2), considered as a square number, is such that half of it (viz., that number which, when multiplied by itself, yields 2 as its product) is not

denumerable, and thus escapes the power of reason.” (N.B. Although half of 2 is 1, half of 2 considered as a square number is $\sqrt{2}$, or $2^{1/2}$.)

Cf. *De Mathematicis Complementis*, Paris edition, Vol. II, 2nd half, f. 67^v, line 23 and f. 69^v, line 13. There the expression “*medietas duplae*” is expanded by the annotator into “*medietas quadrati numeri duplae*”—i.e., “half of the square-number two.”

Note the passage in *DM* 6 (91:7-11): “Ad haec, ex habitudine semitonii, et medietatis duplae, quae est costae quadrati ad diametrum, numerum simpliciore intueor quam nostrae mentis ratio attingere queat”: “Moreover, from the relation of a half-tone [to a full tone]—and from the relation of half a double [proportion], this latter relation being that of the side of a square to its diagonal—I behold a number that is simpler than our mind’s reason can grasp.”

127. See n. 37 above.

128. *DP* 41:16-19. *VS* 12 (32:13). *VS* 26 (77:5-6). Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion* 15.

129. See n. 40 above, as well as examining the text marked by it.

130. *DI* II, 8 (140:6-8). Cf. *DI* II, 9 (150:8-10). *DVD* 13 (57:12-13). See n. 40 above.

131. See, below, n. 48 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*.

132. *DI* I, 24 (77). *DI* II, 5 (119).

In the principal translation of *De Theologicis Complementis*, I do not present the variant of section 12 that is found in the Heidelberg Academy edition on pp. 70-75. This variant section is not a part of Nicholas’s final draft of *De Theologicis Complementis*. Some of the same material is found in *DVD*, written about the same time as *De Theologicis Complementis*. Nicholas originally included the variant section in his draft to the abbot and monks at Tegernsee: “Scripsi hiis diebus *De mathematicis complementis* libellum ad sanctum dominum Nicolaum papam, qui rarissimus est, nam omnia actenus incognita manifestat in mathematicis. Cui libello adiunxi alium *De theologicis complementis*, in quo transtuli mathematicas figuras ad theologicalem infinitatem. Et inserui capitulum quomodo ex imagine simul omnia et singula videntis, quam depictam habeo, quodam sensibili experimento ducamur ad mysticam theologiam, ut certissime intueamur infinitum visum ita omnia simul videre quod singulariter singula, et omni amore et diligentia amplecti, quasi non habeat nisi de illo uno curam. Et non potest concepi quod eam habeat de aliquo alio nisi hoc sibi reveletur. Et plura de hoc. Hos libellos iam primum completos communicabo. Proposui tamen hanc praxim experimentalem, quae pulcherrima est atque clarissima, ampliare. Et pictorem habeo qui faciem similem studebit depingere. Mirabili dulcedine vos ipsi, secundum quem similiter adicere propono, omnia scibilia quodam experimento venari poteritis, maxime in mystica theologia. Ego hucusque non repperi magis gratum medium quo se fragilitas nostra iuvare possit ad conceptum illum qui supra nos ipsos; nec quiescam quousque perficiam.” [Excerpt from Nicholas’s letter of September 14, 1453 to Caspar Aindorffer, Abbot of the Benedictine monastery at Tegernsee, Germany. The excerpt is taken from p. 116 of E. Vansteenberghe’s *Autour de la Docte ignorance, op. cit.* (n. 1 above). Punctuation and spelling have been re-editorialized by me.]

In what follows, I translate the alternate version of section 12:

“*Deus*’ derives from ‘*theos*’ (which means ‘to see’), because God sees all things. Likewise, too, He sees all things by means of a single, fixed viewing and across all

differences of spatial and temporal position, so that whatever He sees, He sees in the following way: viz., as if He saw nothing else but were completely turned toward viewing only that thing and not anything else. [The way in which God's vision goes forth occurs] much more truly than [the way in which] the sun totally shines through all windows, so that one who is present in his own house in Rome sees the sun so totally shining through his window that, as it were, it is not shining through any other window. And although everywhere, at every place, it shines in this way, nonetheless it appears everywhere to radiate so completely to that place where it is seen that it does not radiate to any other place—as if it were concerned only about that place where it is seen and about no other places. By way of comparison: in the bishop's domicile at Brixen the angel that is depicted as holding the emblems of the church 'looks at' each and every one of those who everywhere stand around it in a semi-circle—whether they are toward the east or toward the south or toward the west. And it looks at each of them so intently that none of them can suspect that it is also looking at another of them—cannot suspect it unless he moves to the other's place. And when he moves from place to place, it seems [to him] that the gaze of the angel is moved with him. Similar paintings are found in various other places.

“From the foregoing [consideration of omnivoyance] you will be able to detect wherein the tranquility of all creatures consists. Because every created form [sees] its own Truth, viz., God (who is the Form that gives being to all forms), it finds that it itself is what-it-is by virtue of God's looking upon and causing and illuminating and caring-for it alone, so that it exists in the best way, as if God were not concerned about the others. Moreover, every movement judges, likewise, that God cares only about that which is moved by means of that movement and [that] God will never desert that movement. Moreover, movement measures God by means of movement, as if God Himself moved slowly when that movement is slow, even as the eyes of the depicted angel seem to one who walks around the image to be turned slowly or quickly, in accordance with whether the circumambulator moves slowly or quickly.

“Therefore, suppose that you (who are a contemplator) conceive that God (who is Love) is like that very loving face of the [depicted] angel—a face which infuses to all who look upon it gladness, mirth, delight, and joy. If you conceive that the more God is looked upon by you, the more He who is Love inflames and enlivens [you], then you are conceiving a likeness of eternal happiness, a state where our one God nourishes all [the redeemed] so individually that each of them imagines that God's entire concern and love are directed totally toward delighting him—directed, as it were, toward the goal of loving him as completely as he can be loved, toward loving him and nothing but him. Now, if it is revealed to him that God loves someone else more [than him], he will not be envious, because his imagination does not grasp this fact; rather, he understands that God does not on that account love him any the less, since he sees without any doubt that he is loved to such an extent that he could not at all be loved more greatly. Therefore, he is rightfully tranquil, because he already has all that he can desire. For he is loved as much as he can be loved; and he desires [to be loved] as much as he can be loved. Therefore, he has that which he desires. And this happiness exceeds all manner of description.

“[This appeal to] an image that 'looks around' helps, very greatly, the intellect to conceive, to some extent, how it is that God is the most precise, the most general—and, likewise, the most particular—Measure of all things. Therefore, imagine

there to be some such face which looks around in the way in which I have premised regarding the face of the angel. And imagine that two men move in front of it—one from east to west and the other from west to east. In that case, it will appear that the face moves at the same time in accompaniment of each of them. Therefore, at one and the same time it would move toward opposite places; and at one and the same time it would be in opposite places (viz., in the east and in the west); and at one and the same time it would move from east to west and, vice versa, from west to east; and at one and the same time it would be stationary and would move and, thus, would move unmovingly. Therefore, in God moving coincides with being at rest, and moving from the east coincides with moving from the west, and moving to one place coincides with moving to all different places. Moreover, notice that if you look at that face, you will find that it looks back at you. And as long as you continue to look at it, it never deserts you, whether you remain stationary or move. And if you turn away from it, it turns away from you; but if you turn toward it, it turns toward you.

“But if that face is conceived of as a simple, uncontracted face, free of quantity and magnitude and all qualities, then in the way that you would look at it, it would look back at you: if joyfully, then joyfully; if angrily, then angrily; if graciously, then graciously; if lovingly, then lovingly; if as a man, then as a man; if as a woman, then as a woman; if as a child, then as a child; if in a manly way, then in a manly way; if in a human way, then in a human way—and so on regarding each possible mode. Furthermore, if you wish to consider whether that [uncontracted face] sees you first or whether you see it first, you will find that that face is like the depicted [angel’s] face (viz., immutable), which *earlier* and *later* do not befit; for those are terms which do not befit what is immutable. Therefore, those terms are seen to coincide in that face. For example, [this recognition occurs] when you see—from the fact that that face looks at you in the manner in which you look at it—that, in that case, you look first and it looks second. But because in it *later* coincides with *earlier*, that which appears to you to be later is no more later than earlier. Hence, that face is changed unchangeably, even as it is moved timelessly and motionlessly. But because you are changed, it seems to you that the face is changed. And because you look at it now from this place and now from another place, it seems to you that it looks now from here and now from there. And because you name it now in this way and now in that way, it seems to you that now it is named in one way and now in another way. In like manner, you see that the unnameable God is named in different ways, because He is named by the names of all things and because in Him nameability coincides with unnameability, effability coincides with ineffability, and measurability coincides with immeasurability. For He who is unmeasurable by all existing things in the manner in which they exist is measured in the way in which the invisible is seen.

“Such [truths] and similar ones you the contemplator will be able to detect from that [depicted] face, which bears a likeness to God, who sees all things.”

In the foregoing translation I am reading for lines 18-20 on p. 71 of the Heidelberg Academy edition of *De Theologicis Complementis*: “Quia omnis forma creata veritatem suam <videt> deum scilicet, qui est forma dans omnibus formis esse ...” etc. See n. 146 below. Cf. *DVD* 12 (48) with *DVD* 6 (19:24).

133. See the beginning of section 11 above.

134. See the reference in n. 99 above.

135. See n. 118 above.

136. *De Theologicis Complementis* 12:60-62. Cf. 4:32-33. See the references in n. 27 above.

137. DVD 13 (54).

138. DVD 13 (55:7-11).

139. DVD 1 (6:4-6). DVD 5 (18:2-3). DVD 8 (33:1). NA 23 (104:13-14). *De Deo Abscondito* 14:1. *De Quaerendo Deum* 1 (19:9-11). Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *SCG* (*op. cit.*, n. 90 above) I.44.10. Pseudo-Dionysius, *De Divinis Nominibus* XII, 2 (*Dionysiaca* I, 530. PG 3:970C). John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa* I, 9 (PG 94:837A). Albertus Magnus, *Super Dionysium de Divinis Nominibus* XII, 7. solutio (p. 430, lines 35-40), edited by Paul Simon (Münster: Aschendorff, 1972) as Vol. 37, Part I in the series *Alberti Magni Opera Omnia*; series edited by B. Geyer. Plato, *Cratylus* 397D. Eriugena, *Periphyseon* I, 12 [PL 122:452B-D. Sheldon Williams's edition (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1968), Book I, p. 60].

140. Here Nicholas means an infinite circle, for all things are one only in the infinite circle, not in finite circles. *DI* I, 21 (66:3-6). *Ap.* 23:10-14. *De Sapientia* II (36:5-6). DVD 3 (9:11-12). Similarly, at the end of *DP* 60 Nicholas is referring to an infinite circle, even though he does not use the word "infinite".

141. DVD 6 (19:13-15).

142. Here (14:10) I follow Codex Latinus Monacensis 14213 and read "*omnium*" in place of "*videntium*".

143. Cf. Anselm of Canterbury, *Monologion* 33.

144. *DP* 38:13-14.

145. DVD 8 (30:20-21): "Since Your seeing is causing, You who cause all things see all things." DVD 12 (50:1-5): "Your seeing is Your creating; and You do not see anything other than Yourself but are Your own object.... If so, then how is it that You create things that are other than Yourself? For You seem to create Yourself, even as You see Yourself." Cf. DVD 9 (37:1-5).

146. God sees Himself, His image, in creatures. But He is also "seen" by creatures in them themselves. DVD 10 (41:6-12): "If I were to see just as I am seeable, I would not be a creature. And if You, O God, were not to see just as You are seeable, You would not be God Almighty. You are seeable by all creatures, and You see all creatures. For in that You see all creatures You are seen by all creatures. For otherwise creatures could not exist, since they exist by means of Your seeing. But if they were not to see You, who see [them], they would not receive being from You. The being of a creature is, alike, Your seeing and Your being seen."

147. Insofar as statements such as "God is *causa sui*" and "God is *creator sui*" have a positive sense, that sense is only metaphorical—as Nicholas goes on to explain. (Cf. *DP* 11.) Moreover, God's being *causa sui* and *creator sui* is the same thing as His being *sine causa* and *sine creatore*.

148. *Compendium* 3 (6:12-18).

149. "... thereupon": i.e., upon seeing the coincidence just spoken of. The translation that follows is, of necessity, quite free. I have repunctuated the Latin: "Et tunc id quod videtur absurdum, fit per aliud vocabulum tolerabile. Quod quidem vocabulum, quoad nos aliud, non est ibi aliud, sed realiter synonymum."

150. I omit the epilogue contained on pp. 84-86 of the Heidelberg Academy edition of the Latin text of *De Theologicis Complementis*, since it was not written by Nicholas and is of no importance as a summary of his treatise.