# NICHOLAS OF CUSA:
# METAPHYSICAL SPECULATIONS

Six Latin Texts
Translated into English

by

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# DE APICE THEORIAE
## (Concerning the Loftiest Level of Contemplative Reflection)

by

## NICHOLAS OF CUSA

(Translated from Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia.
Vol. XII: De Venatione Sapientiae. De Apice Theoriae.
Edited by Raymond Klibansky and Hans G. Senger.
Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1982)

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# CONCERNING THE LOFTIEST LEVEL OF CONTEMPLATIVE REFLECTION[1]
## (De Apice Theoriae)

*Peter*: I see that you have been entranced in deep meditation for some days—entranced to such an extent that I have feared being too bothersome to you if I accosted you with questions about the thoughts that are occurring [to you].[2] But since I now find you to be less intent and to be joyous, as if you had discovered something important, you will be indulgent, I trust, if I question you more than usual.

*Cardinal*: Gladly. For I have often wondered at your very prolonged reticence, especially since for fourteen years[3] now you have heard me saying many things, both publicly and privately, about scholarly findings, and especially since you have collected most of the works that I have written.[4] Now that by the gift of God and by my ministry you have obtained the divine office of a most sacred priest,[5] assuredly the time has come for you to begin to speak and to question.

2 *Peter*: I feel sheepish because of my inexperience. Nevertheless, encouraged by your graciousness, I ask what new thing it is which has entered your meditative reflection this Easter season. I thought you had already perfected the whole of the speculation that has been set forth in so many of your different manuscripts.

*Cardinal*: If the Apostle Paul, who was caught up unto the third heaven,[6] did not even then comprehend the Incomprehensible,[7] no one will ever be content not continually and insistently to seek to comprehend better Him who is greater than all comprehension.[8]

*Peter*: You are seeking what?

*Cardinal*: You are right.

*Peter*: I ask you a question, and you make fun of me. When I ask what you are seeking, you answer: "You are right." Yet, I am asserting nothing but, rather, am asking.

*Cardinal*: When you said "You are seeking what" (*quid*), you spoke correctly because I am seeking something (*quid*).[9] Whoever seeks seeks something. For if he were not seeking something,[10] then surely he would not be *seeking*. Therefore, like all scholars, I seek something, because I exceedingly desire to know what whatness itself is, i.e., what quiddity itself is,[11] which is being sought so intently.

*Peter*: Do you think that quiddity can be found?

*Cardinal*: Yes, indeed. For the motivation which is present to all scholars is not in vain.[12]

**3** *Peter*: If up until now no one has found [quiddity],[13] are you attempting something over and beyond all the others?[14]

*Cardinal*: I think that many men have seen it to some extent and have left behind in their writings their sighting of it. For if quiddity (which always has been sought and is presently being sought, and will henceforth be sought)[15] were altogether unknown, how could it be sought,[16] since even if it were found it would remain unknown? And so, a certain wise man said that it is seen by all men, although from afar.[17]

**4** Therefore, although for many years now I have realized that quiddity must be sought beyond all cognitive power and before all variation and opposition, I failed to notice that Quiddity which exists in and of itself is the invariable subsistent-being of all substances—and, thus, that it is neither replicable nor repeatable[18] and, hence, that there are not different Quiddities of different beings but that there is one and the same [ultimate] Basis[19] of all things.[20] Subsequently, I saw that I must acknowledge that the [ultimate] Basis of things, or [ultimate] Subsistent-being of things, is *possible* to be. And because it is possible to be, surely it cannot exist apart from Possibility itself.[21] For how would it be possible apart from Possibility? And so, Possibility itself—without which nothing whatsoever is possible—is that than which there cannot possibly be anything that is more subsistent.[22] Therefore, it is Whatness itself, which is being sought—i.e., is Quiddity itself, without which there cannot possibly exist anything. And with enormous delight I have been engaged in this contemplative reflection during this festive season.

*Peter*: Without Possibility, as you say (and I see you to be uttering the truth), nothing whatsoever is possible; and, assuredly, there is not anything apart from Quiddity. Therefore, I well see that Possibility itself can be said to be Quiddity. But since you previously stated many things about Actualized-possibility, setting them forth in a trialogue,[23] I wonder why they do not suffice.

**5** *Cardinal*: You will see a bit later that *Possibility itself*[24]—than which nothing can possibly be earlier or better or more powerful—far more fittingly names that without which nothing whatsoever can possibly exist or live or understand[25] than does "Actualized-possibility" or any other name whatsoever.[26] For if that thing can [fittingly]

be named,[27] then surely *Possibility itself*, than which nothing can possibly be more perfect, will better name it. I think that no other clearer, truer, or easier name is positable.

*Peter*: Why do you say "easier," for it seems to me that nothing is more difficult than a thing that is ever sought and never fully found?

*Cardinal*: The clearer truth is, the easier it is. (I once thought that truth is better found amid the obscure.)[28] Truth, in which Possibility itself shines forth very brightly, is of great power. For it proclaims [itself] in the streets, as you have read in my book about the Layman.[29] Most assuredly, truth shows that it is everywhere easy to find.

**6** What boy or youth is ignorant of possibility?[30] For each of them acknowledges that he can eat, can run, or can speak. And there is no one with a mind who is so ignorant that he does not know, without [the aid of] a teacher, (1) that nothing exists that is not possible to exist and (2) that without possibility nothing whatsoever can either *exist* or *possess* or *act* or *be acted upon*. If any youth were asked whether he can carry a [certain] stone, and if, upon giving the reply that he can, he were asked further whether he could do so without possibility, or ability: surely, he would answer "not at all." For he would deem the question absurd and superfluous, on the ground that no one of sound mind would entertain doubt about something's being able to act or to be acted upon in the absence of possibility. For everyone who is *able* presupposes that possibility is so necessary that nothing at all can possibly occur if possibility is not presupposed. For example, if something is possible to be known, assuredly nothing is more known than is possibility. If something is possible to be easy, assuredly nothing is easier than is possibility. If something is possible to be certain, nothing is more certain than is possibility. Likewise, nothing is earlier or stronger or more solid or more substantial or more glorious, etc., [than is possibility]. But that which lacks possibility neither can exist nor can be good nor can be any other thing whatsoever.

*Peter*: I see nothing more assuredly than these points; and I think that their truth cannot escape anyone.

**7** *Cardinal*: Attentiveness is the only difference between your [seeing] and mine. For example, if I were to ask you what you saw in all of Adam's descendants who have existed, do exist, and will exist (even were they infinite in number), wouldn't you immediately reply, if you were attentive, that you saw in them all only the paternal possibility[31] of the first parent?

*Peter*: Yes, absolutely.

*Cardinal*: And if I continued by asking what you saw in the case of lions and eagles and all other kinds of animals, wouldn't you reply in the same way?

*Peter*: In no other way, to be sure.

*Cardinal*: What about in the case of all things caused and originated?

*Peter*: I would say that I see only the possibility of the first cause and of the first beginning.

*Cardinal*: And suppose I asked you further: "Since the possibility of all such [relative] first [beginnings] is altogether inexplicable, then from where does such possibility derive its power?"[32] Wouldn't you immediately reply [as follows]?: "[it derives] from Absolute and altogether Uncontracted[33] omnipotent Possibility, than which nothing more powerful can be either perceived or imagined or understood; for Absolute Possibility is the Possibility of all possibility, than which nothing can possibly be earlier or more perfect, and in whose absence nothing at all could remain."

*Peter*: Yes, indeed, I would agree.

**8** *Cardinal*: Hence, Possibility itself is the Quiddity and Basis of all things.[34] Necessarily, there are contained in its power both those things which exist and those things which do not exist. Wouldn't you agree that these points are to be fully affirmed in this way?

*Peter*: I would agree completely.

*Cardinal*: Therefore, Possibility itself[35] is called *Light* by some saints[36]—not perceptible light or rational light or intelligible light but the Light of all things that can give light—since nothing can possibly be brighter or clearer or more beautiful than Possibility. Therefore, look unto perceptible light, without which there cannot be perceptual seeing; and note that in every color and in everything visible there is no other basis than light, which appears in differing ways in the different modes-of-being of the colors.[37] And note that if light is removed, then neither color nor anything visible nor [any] seeing can remain. But the clearness of light, insofar as light exists in itself, transcends visual power. Therefore, light is not seen as it is, but, rather, it is manifested in things visible—manifested more clearly in one thing and more dimly in another.[38] And the more clearly a visible thing represents light, the more noble and beautiful [that thing is]. However, light enfolds and transcends the clearness and beauty of all visible things. Light manifests itself in visible things not in order to show it-

self as visible but, rather, in order to manifest itself as invisible, since its clarity cannot be grasped in visible things. For he who in visible things sees light's clarity as invisible sees light's clarity more truly. Do you grasp these points?

*Peter*: I grasp them all the more readily because of having heard them from you on many occasions.[39]

**9** *Cardinal*: Transfer, then, to intelligible things these [considerations about] perceptual things. For example, [transfer] to Possibility in an unqualified sense, i.e., to Absolute Possibility, [considerations about] light's possibility; and [transfer] to [absolutely] Simple Being [considerations about] the being of color. For Simple Being, which is visible to the mind alone, is to the mind as the being of color is to the sense of sight. Moreover, observe what the mind sees in different beings, which are not anything except what they are possible to be and which can have only what-they-have-from-Possibility. And you will see that different beings are only different modes of the manifestation of Possibility but that their [ultimate] Quiddity cannot be different,[40] because it is Possibility itself, which is manifested in different ways.

**10** Moreover, in those things which either exist or live or understand, nothing can be seen other than Possibility itself, of which the possibility-of-existing, the possibility-of-living, and the possibility-of-understanding are manifestations.[41] For in all power what can be seen other than the Possibility of all power? Nevertheless, in all powers (whether of being or of knowing) Possibility as it is [in itself] cannot be most perfectly grasped; rather, it is manifested in those [powers]—manifested in one more powerfully than in another. Indeed, [it is manifested] more powerfully in intellectual power[42] than in perceptual power, to the degree that the intellect is more powerful than are the senses. But Possibility in and of itself is more truly seen beyond all cognitive power—seen, nevertheless, by means of intelligible power[43]—when it is seen to exceed the entire capability of the intelligible power. That which the intellect grasps it understands. Therefore, when the mind sees by means of its own capability that Possibility itself, because of its excellence, cannot be grasped, then by means of [this] seeing it sees beyond its own capability—just as a boy sees that the size of a stone is larger than the degree-of-his-strength can carry. Therefore, the mind's power to see exceeds its power to comprehend.

**11** Hence, the mind's simple vision[44] is not a comprehending vision,

but, rather, [in the case of simple vision] the mind elevates itself from a comprehending vision unto seeing the Incomprehensible. For example, when it sees, comprehendingly, that one thing is greater than another, it elevates itself to seeing That than which there cannot be anything greater. And this Thing is, indeed, infinite—greater than everything measurable or comprehensible. This capability of the mind to see beyond all comprehensible power[45] is the supreme capability of the mind, wherein Possibility itself manifests itself maximally. Moreover, it is unbounded except by Possibility itself. For example, the possibility, or power, to see is ordered to Possibility itself to such an extent that mind can foresee whither it is aiming—just as a pilgrim foresees the goal of his journey, so that he can direct his course toward the desired goal. Therefore, unless the mind could see from afar the goal of rest and of [fulfilled] desire and of its own joy and happiness, how could it hasten to reach [that goal]? The Apostle rightly admonished that we are to run in such a way that we reach [the goal].[46] Therefore, gather together these [considerations], so that you may see that all things are ordered (1) to the mind's being able to hasten onward to Possibility itself, which it sees from afar, and (2) to the mind's comprehending the Incomprehensible[47] as best it can. For Possibility itself is alone that which is able to satisfy—when it is manifested in the glory of its majesty—the mind's desire. For Possibility itself is the Whatness that is being sought.

Do you understand what I have been saying?

**12** *Peter*: Although [the meaning of your statements] exceeds my capability [to understand], I see that the things you have said are true. For what could satisfy the mind's desire other than Possibility itself, the Possibility-of-all-possibility, without which nothing whatsoever is possible? For if [what can satisfy the mind's desire] could be anything other than Possibility itself, how would [that thing] be possible in the absence of Possibility? But if it could not be possible without Possibility, then assuredly it would have from Possibility the fact that it is possible. The mind is not satisfied unless it comprehends That than which nothing can possibly be better. And this Thing cannot be anything except Possibility itself, i.e., the Possibility of all possibility. Therefore, you rightly see that Possibility itself—the Whatness that is sought by every mind—is alone the *Beginning* of the mind's desire, for it is That than which there cannot possibly be anything earlier. [And you see that it alone] is the *End* of that same mental desire, since nothing surpassing Possibility is possible to be desired.

**13** *Cardinal*: Perfectly correct. You see now, Peter, how much our custom of conversing, and how much the reading of my works, helps you readily to understand me. Whatever I see regarding Possibility, you too (I have no doubt) will soon see, if you apply your mind.

Since every question about what is possible presupposes Possibility, doubt cannot be entertained about Possibility. For doubt does not pertain to Possibility. For whoever would question whether Possibility exists sees as soon as he thinks about it that the question is not germane, since without Possibility no question could be posed about Possibility. Still less can one ask whether Possibility is this or that, since the possibility-of-existing and the possibility of being this or that presuppose Possibility itself. And so, it is evident that Possibility itself precedes all doubt that can be entertained. Therefore, nothing is more certain than is Possibility itself, since [any] doubt [about it] can only presuppose it, since nothing more sufficient or more perfect than it can be thought. Thus, nothing can be added to it or subtracted[48] from it.

**14** *Peter*: Tell [me] now, I ask, only the following: whether you now wish to disclose something clearer than before regarding the First.[49] For you have frequently and at length said many things [thereabout], although not as much as can be said.

*Cardinal*: I propose to disclose to you now this readily accessible route which was not previously communicated openly and which I consider to be most secret: viz., (1) that all precision-of-speculation is to be fixed only on Possibility and its manifestation and (2) that all men who have seen accurately have endeavored to express this truth. For those men who affirmed there to be only the One looked unto Possibility. Those who said there to be both the One and the many looked unto both Possibility and its many manifested modes-of-being. Those who maintained that nothing new is possible to occur looked unto the Possibility of all possibility-to-be or possibility-to-become. Those who affirm the newness of the world and of its events turned their minds to the manifestations of Possibility. By way of illustration: if someone were to turn his mind's sight to the possibility, or power, of oneness: he surely would see in every number and in all plurality only oneness's power, than which nothing is more powerful; and he would see that every number is only a manifestation of the innumerable and interminable power of oneness, for numbers are only special modes-of-manifestation of the power of oneness.[50] This power is better manifested in the odd number three than in the [even] number four; and

it is better manifested in certain whole numbers than in other whole numbers. In a corresponding way, genera and species (and whatever other such things) are to be construed as modes-of-being of Possibility's manifestation.

**15** Those who deny there to be a plurality of forms that bestow *being* looked unto Possibility, than which nothing is more sufficient. And those who affirm a plurality of specific forms look unto the specific modes-of-being of Possibility's manifestation. Those who maintained that God is the Fount of Ideas and that there is a plurality of Ideas meant that which I am stating, viz., that God is Possibility, which is manifested by various and specifically different modes of being. Those who deny the existence of Ideas and of such forms looked unto Possibility, which alone is the Whatness of all possibility. Those who claim that nothing can perish look unto eternal and incorruptible Possibility. Those who claim that death is something real and who think that things perish train their sight on the modes-of-being of Possibility's manifestation. Those who say that God, the Omnipotent Father, is the Creator of the heavens and of the earth say that which I say: viz., that Possibility itself, than which nothing is more omnipotent, created the heavens and the earth—and all things—for the sake of manifesting Himself.[51] For in all the things that exist or that are possible to exist nothing can be seen other than Possibility—just as in all things made and all things to-be-made [only] the power of the First Maker [is seen], and just as in all things moved and all things to-be-moved [there is seen only] the power of the First Mover.

Accordingly, by such analyses [as the foregoing] you see that all [these speculative matters] are easy, and you see that all differences
**16** pass over into a concordance. Therefore, my dearly beloved Peter, with keen directedness turn your mind's eye to this secret, and with this analysis enter into my writings and into whatever other writings you read, and occupy yourself especially with my books and sermons—particularly with *The Gift of Light*,[52] which, if rightly understood in accordance with the preceding remarks, contains the same thing as this present book. Likewise, keep in mind my books *On the Icon of God* (or *On the Vision of God*)[53] and *On Seeking God*,[54] so that you may better familiarize yourself with these theological matters. And with great affection conjoin to these books the memorandum concerning the loftiest level of contemplative reflection—the memorandum which I now very briefly submit. I hope that you will be an acceptable contemplator of God and will pray unceasingly for me amid your sacred

offices.

**17**

## *Memorandum concerning the Loftiest Level of Contemplative Reflection*[55]

The loftiest level of contemplative reflection is Possibility itself, the Possibility of all possibility, without which nothing whatsoever can possibly be contemplated. For how would [contemplation] be possible without Possibility?

I. Nothing can be added to Possibility itself, since it is the Possibility of all possibility. Therefore, Possibility itself is not the possibility of existing or the possibility of living or the possibility of understanding.[56] (A similar point holds true regarding all possibility that has a qualification added.)[57] Nevertheless, Possibility itself is the Possibility of the possibility-of-existing and of the possibility-of-living and of the possibility-of-understanding.

**18** II. Only what is possible to exist does exist. Therefore, *existence* does not add anything to the possibility of existing. Likewise, *man* does not add anything to the possibility of being a man; nor does *young man* add anything to the possibility of being a young man or of being a big man. And because possibility that has a qualification added does not add anything to Possibility itself, one who intently contemplates sees nothing other than Possibility itself.

**19** III. Nothing can possibly exist prior to Possibility. For without Possibility how would it be possible to exist? Likewise, nothing can possibly be better than Possibility—or be more powerful than Possibility, or more perfect, simple, clear, known, true, sufficient, strong, stable, easy, etc. And because Possibility itself precedes all possibility that has a qualification added, it cannot either exist[58] or be named[59] or be perceived or be imagined or be understood. For that which is signified by "Possibility" precedes all such things, although it is the Basis of them all, even as light is the basis of [all] colors.

**20** IV. Possibility with a qualification added is an image of Possibility itself, than which nothing is simpler. Thus, the possibility-of-existing is an image of Possibility itself; and the possibility of living is an image of Possibility itself; and the possibility of understanding is an image of Possibility itself.[60] However, the possibility of living is a truer image of Possibility itself [than is the possibility of existing]; and the possibility of understanding is a still truer image [than is the possibility of living]. Therefore, in all things a contemplator sees Pos-

sibility itself, even as in an image the original (*veritas*) is seen.[61] And just as the image is a manifestation of the original, so all things are only manifestations of Possibility itself.

**21** V. The possibility, or power, of Aristotle's mind manifests itself in his books. They do not display the power of his mind perfectly; yet, one book [displays it] more perfectly than does another, and the books were produced only to the end that his mind manifest itself. Moreover, his mind was not forced to produce his books, for his free and noble mind willed to manifest itself.[62] In a similar way, Possibility itself [manifests itself] in all things.[63] Now, the mind is as an intellectual book that views in its own self and in all things[64] the intent of its Author.

**22** VI. Although in Aristotle's books only the power of his mind is contained, nevertheless those who are ignorant do not recognize this fact. Similarly, although in the universe there is contained only Possibility itself, nevertheless those who lack intelligence are unable to recognize this fact. Now, the living intellectual light that is called mind contemplates, in its own self, Possibility itself. Thus, all things exist for the sake of mind, and mind exists for the sake of seeing Possibility itself.

**23** VII. The possibility, or power, of choosing enfolds within itself the possibility of existing, the possibility of living, and the possibility of understanding. Moreover, the power of free will does not at all depend on the body, as does the sensual power of our animal nature's desire. Hence, the power of free will[65] is not affected by the weakness of the body. For that power never grows old or grows faint, as, in the aged, do sensuality and the senses; rather, it remains [strong] and governs the senses. For example, when the eyes are directed toward an object, the free will does not always allow the eyes to observe the object but turns them away, in order that they not view what is worthless or shameful. [Or, again, the will restrains the appetites] so that one does not [always] eat when hungry—and so on, as regards other examples. Therefore, the mind sees praiseworthy and shameful things, virtues and vices (something which the senses do not see); and the mind can compel the senses to abide by its judgment and not by their own desires. Hereby we experience that Possibility is powerfully and incorruptibly manifested in the mind's power and that [the mind] has separate existence from the body.[66] He is less amazed at this [separate existence] who experiences the fact that in aqua vitae cer-

tain herbs' powers are separated from their bodies—who experiences it when he sees the same efficacy of aqua vitae as the herb had before it was immersed in aqua vitae.

**24** VIII. Intelligible things are what the mind sees, and they are [ontologically] prior to perceptible things. Therefore, the mind sees itself. And because the mind sees that its own possibility, or power, is not the Possibility of all possibility (since many things are impossible for the mind), it sees that it is not Possibility itself but is an image of Possibility itself. And so, since in the mind's own possibility the mind sees Possibility itself, and since the mind is only its own possibility of existing, the mind sees that it itself is a mode-of-manifestation of Possibility itself. And it sees that, likewise, this point holds true in the case of all existing things.[67] Therefore, whatever-things-the-mind-sees are modes-of-manifestation of incorruptible Possibility.

**25** IX. Although the being of a material object is lowest and is very ignoble, it is seen by the mind alone. For that which the senses see is [only] an accident, which does not exist [independently] but which is present [in a subject].[68] That being (of a material object) which is nothing but the material object's possibility-of-existing, or power-of-existing, is not attained by any of the senses, since it is neither a quality nor a quantity; and so, it is not divisible or corruptible. For example, when I divide an apple, I do not divide the material object [as such]. For a part of the apple is a material object, just as is the whole apple. Now, the material object is long, wide, and deep; without these [properties] there is neither a material object nor a complete dimension. The being of a material object is the being of a complete dimension. Material length is not separated from width and depth, even as width is not separated from length and depth; likewise, depth is not separated from length and width. Length, width, and depth are not *parts* of a material object, since a part is not the whole. To be sure, the length of a material object is the material object; the same thing holds true of width and depth. Moreover, the length of the material being (this length *is* the material object) is not *another* material object than is the width or the depth of the [given] material being; rather, each of these [three properties] is the same indivisible and unreplicable[69] material object.[70] Although the length is not the width or the depth, it is nonetheless the origin of the width; and the length together with the width is the origin of the depth. In this way the mind sees that in the triune being of a material object Possibility itself is mani-

fested incorruptibly.[71] And since the mind sees this [triunity] to be manifested in the lowest, material being, it also sees it to be manifested more nobly and more powerfully in every nobler being. And [the mind sees triunity to be manifested] more clearly in it itself than in living being or in material being. But how it is that triune Possibility is manifested clearly in a mind that remembers, understands, and wills was seen and revealed by the mind of St. Augustine.[72]

**26** X. In its doings or makings the mind sees most certainly that Possibility is manifested in the maker's *possibility-of-making* and in the makable's *possibility-of-being-made* and in the *possibility of the union* of both. There are not three possibilities; rather, one and the same possibility is the possibility of the maker, of the makable, and of the union. Likewise, with regard to sensation, vision, taste, imagination, intellection, volition, choice, contemplation, and all good and virtuous works: the mind sees that the triune possibility is the shining forth of that Possibility than which nothing is more active or more perfect. However, because Possibility does not shine forth in works of vice, the mind experiences them as worthless, wicked, and dead—and as obscuring and polluting the mind's light.

**27** XI. There cannot be any other substantial or quidditative Beginning—whether formal or material—than Possibility. Those who have spoken about different forms and essentialities and about different Ideas and species have not looked unto Possibility and seen how in different generic and specific modes-of-being it manifests itself as it wills to.[73] Where Possibility does not shine forth things lack a basis—as what is worthless and as defect, error, vice, weakness, death, corruption, and the likes, lack being, because they lack the manifestation of Possibility.

**28** XII. The triune and one God—whose name is "the Omnipotent one," or "the Power of all power"[74]—is signified by "Possibility itself." With Him all things are possible[75] and nothing is impossible; and He is the Strength of all strength and the Might of all might. His most perfect Manifestation—than which no manifestation can be more perfect—is Christ,[76] who by His word and example leads us unto a clear contemplative-vision [*contemplatio*] of Possibility. And this contemplative-vision is the happiness which alone satisfies the mind's supreme desire.

These few points, by themselves, are points that can suffice.

# 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 Possest* [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-Grünewald 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 Possest* (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 APICE THEORIAE*

1. This is the last of Nicholas's works. It was composed in 1464, around Easter, in Rome. The two discussants are Cardinal Cusa himself and his secretary, Peter of Erkelenz, Canon of Aachen. See Erich Meuthen's "Peter von Erkelenz (ca. 1430-1494)," *Zeitschrift für Aachener Geschichtsvereins*, 84-85 (1977-78), 701-744.

Nicholas died on August 11, 1464, in Todi, Italy.

2. As the entire dialogue attests, Peter's questions are questions about Nicholas's thoughts, not about Peter's own conceptual puzzlings.

3. Raymond Klibansky points out that Nicholas made Peter his secretary in 1449. See p. XIV of Vol. XII of *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1982).

4. Certain works of Nicholas's have been lost—e.g., *De Figura Mundi*, mentioned at the end of *VS* 22. Others were not collected into Codices Cusani 218 and 219, which contain the works gathered by Peter but copied by scribes in Rome.

5. Peter was ordained by Nicholas in 1464.

6. II Corinthians 12:2.

7. "Comprehending the Incomprehensible incomprehensibly" is a facet of learned ignorance: one comprehends that God's nature is such as to be incomprehensible to every finite mind. See *DI* I, 12 (33:15-18). *Idiota de Sapientia* I (12:6). *DVD* 13 (53). *NA* 8 (30:5-6). *VS* 12 (31:3-4). In a strict sense, God is comprehensible only to Himself. See *DI* I, 26 (88:19-20). *CA* I (88:16).

8. Cusa, *De Deo Abscondito* 8. Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion* 15. Cf. *Idiota de Sapientia* II (28:14-15). *De Quaerendo Deum* 5 (49:7-9). *DVD* 16 (71-72). *DP* 41:16-19. *VS* 12 (33:8-11).

9. The Latin word "*quid*" can be translated into English both as "what" and as "something". Two sentences later (2:14-15) Nicholas himself writes "*aliquid seu quid*". See notes 10 and 11 below. In some contexts (e.g., at 4:10) "*quid*" can also be translated as "whatness".

10. The single English word "something" suffices here to translate Nicholas's expression "*aliquid seu quid*". See n. 9 above.

11. "… to know what whatness itself is, i.e., what quiddity itself is": "*scire … quid sit ipsum quid seu quidditas ….*" (I regularly use the spelling "*quidditas*" in lieu of "*quiditas*".)

12. *DI* I, 1 (2:3-9). *VS*, Prologue (1:18-19). *Compendium* 2 (4:7-13). *VS* 20 (57:4-6): "Divina enim providentia, sicut non deficit in necessariis, ita non habundat in superfluis."

13. *DI* I, 3 (10:18-19). *Ap*. 28. *De Quaerendo Deum* 5 (49:20-21). *De Genesi* 4

(174:1-2). *VS* 29 (87:7-10).

14. Here (at 3:1) I follow Codex Latinus Cusanus 219 in placing a break after "*repperit*", not after "*quid*".

15. Aristotle, *Metaphysica* VII ($1028^{b}2$-4). Cf. Cusa, *VS* 12 (31).

16. Plato, *Meno* 80D.

17. Job 36:25.

18. See, above, n. 105 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*. In the present passage of *De Apice* Nicholas expresses himself clumsily. (See, above, n. 1, paragraph 2 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*.) The fact to which he previously failed to pay sufficient attention is that Quiddity, existing in and of itself, must also be Possibility itself. Immediately after his words "*non attendi*" ("I failed to notice," or, more freely, "I failed to pay sufficient attention to the fact that …") he gives us his reasoning that led up to his insight about the relationship between Quiddity (or Subsistent-being) and Possibility. He does *not* mean that he previously failed to realize that there is but one unreplicable, unrepeatable *Quidditas* which is the *Hypostasis* or *Subsistentia* of all things. Indeed, under the influence of Eckhart he recognized this latter point even before completing *De Docta Ignorantia* (1440). See *Sermo* XIX (=13), margin number 13, lines 17-26. Cf. therewith the later (1441) *Sermo* XXIV (=18), margin numbers 8 & 10 & 14. See also *DI* I, 3 (10:18-20), *DI* I, 5 (14:5-8), *NA* 18 (84-85), and *Ap*. 33. The main lines of Nicholas's (to be sure, non-pantheistic) metaphysic of contraction are not inconsistent. Naturally, there are progressions and modifications in his thinking—changes such as in (1) his articulation of the differences between the operations of *ratio* and of *intellectus*, (2) his introducing of new names for God, (3) his shifts in his statements about cosmology, (4) his articulation of the relationship between the *via negativa* and the *via mystica*, and (5) his approach in *De Coniecturis* as compared with his strategies in his other treatises and dialogues. Nicholas's terminology is loose. (See n. 32 below.) Accordingly, in one and the same work, viz., *De Visione Dei*, he speaks (in changing metaphors) of God (1) as in Paradise, surrounded by the wall of coincidence [11 (47:16-17], (2) as Infinity itself, within which opposites coincide [13 (55:9-11)], and (3) as above, or beyond, the coincidence of contradictories [13 (54:14-15) and 11 (47:18-20)]. Moreover, when Nicholas says that in God opposites coincide, he means that in God both contraries and contradictories coincide. Thus, in God, the contrary temporalities 'past,' 'present,' and 'future' coincide [*DVD* 10 (43:17-18)]. But, likewise, in God, the temporal coincides with its contradictory, viz., the non-temporal; for in God "all temporal succession coincides in [one and] the same *now* of eternity" [*DVD* 10 (43:15-17)]. However, the many different contexts in which Nicholas speaks of a coincidence of opposites—for example, the context of the human mind [see *DM* 15 (158:1-2) and 3 (69:10-11)]—render his doctrine of coincidence complex and evolving. Yet, he nowhere denies—not in *De Coniecturis* I, 6 (24), not in the *Apologia*, not in *De Visione Dei*—that opposites coincide *in* God (who, nonetheless, is more than, is higher than, a coincidence of opposites, insofar as we can conceive of there being such a coincidence).

An interpretation opposed to the foregoing one can be found in F. Edward Cranz, "The *De aequalitate* and the *De principio* of Nicholas of Cusa," pp. 271-280 in Gerald Christianson and Thomas M. Izbicki, editors, *Nicholas of Cusa on Christ and the Church* (Leiden: Brill, 1996). A detailed discussion of Nicholas's doctrine of *coincidentia* is contained on pp. 155-232 of Kurt Flasch's *Die Metaphysik des Einen bei*

*Nikolaus von Kues* (Leiden: Brill, 1973). Passages in which Nicholas explicitly mentions a development in his thought are *De Coniecturis* I, 6 (24), *De Aequalitate* 49, *VS* Prologue, and *De Apice Theoriae* 4 & 5.

19. This ultimate Basis (*hypostasis*), or Foundation, is God. God is the Quiddity of quiddities (*Ap*. 33) and the Possibility of all possibility (*De Apice* 17:2), or the Power of all power (*De Apice* 28:2).

20. See, above, n. 135 of Notes to *De Beryllo*. Also see *De Dato Patris Luminum* 2 (98). Cf. pp. 8-31 of my *Miscellany on Nicholas of Cusa*.

21. The Latin words "*posse ipsum*" are here translated by "Possibility itself." Nicholas uses "*posse ipsum*" as a name for God. The meaning of "*posse*" conveys not only the idea of possibility but also the idea of power. Therefore, in some contexts, I translate it appositively as "possibility, or power"—or as "possibility, or ability."

In *Compendium* 10 (29-31) and in the *Compendium*'s epilogue, as well as in *DM* 11 (130-131), I rendered "*posse*" by the English word "capability," doing so in order to bring out both the notion of power and that of possibility. (See the translations in my *Nicholas of Cusa on Wisdom and Knowledge*.) In *De Possest*, however, the Word "Possibility" works better, furnishing, as it does, a contrast with Nicholas's use of the word "*actus*," while avoiding the term "Potentiality," which suggests a passive power, which Nicholas and others believe God not to have. Since words are, so to speak, spheres of meaning, not points of meaning, one dare not in the name of consistency be rigoristic. Any number of translations will be acceptable. English has no one word that will serve all the same purposes as does the Latin expression "*posse ipsum*."

The intensive pronoun "*ipsum*" ("itself"), in "*posse ipsum*," I sometimes translate and sometimes leave untranslated. As Nicholas uses it, it frequently serves merely to indicate the case of the indeclinable verbal noun "*posse*" and, therefore, need not always be expressed in English. I have let English style and clarity govern my choice of rendition, which on occasion becomes arbitrary. Cf., above, n. 19 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*.

22. Like Anselm before him (*Monologion* 31), Nicholas subscribes to the Neo-Platonic doctrine of degrees of being.

23. "… setting them forth in a trialogue": viz., in *De Possest* (1460).

24. The words "Possibility itself" are here italicized inasmuch as they are being both used and mentioned.

25. *VS* 16 (48). *VS* 21 (60:8-10). See, above, n. 274 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae* and n. 18 of Notes to *De Principio*.

26. Here Nicholas regards "*posse ipsum*" as a more suitable name for God than is "*possest*" or "*non-aliud*." See n. 58 below.

27. According to Nicholas all names for God are metaphorical, or symbolical. Some of these symbolisms are more fitting than are others, as judged by the revelation in Scripture and by our conceiving of God as That than which nothing greater can be thought. Cf. the end of *VS* 34: "Nullum igitur nomen ex omnibus quae nominari possunt, illi convenit, licet nomen suum non sit aliud ab omni nominabili nomine et in omni nomine nominetur, quod innominabile manet." Note also *De Deo Abscondito* 13.

28. *Ap*. 20. *DP* 74. Regarding the claim that the clearer truth is, the easier it is: see Rudolf Haubst on Nicholas's concept of *theologia facilis* [pp. 71-75 of Haubst's *Streifzüge in die cusanische Theologie* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1991]. See Cusa, *Id-*

*iota de Sapientia* II (29:17) and II (30:14). *DVD*, Prologue (1:2-3).

29. *Idiota de Sapientia* I (3:12-13).

30. Here the reader must remember that "*posse*" signifies *possibility* qua *power*, or *capability*. See n. 21 above.

31. See n. 30 above.

32. Here at 7:15 Nicholas uses the accusative case of the word "*virtus*" to signify power or efficacy. Elsewhere he uses "*potentia*" (10:4 or 28:2) or "*potestas*" (8:2) or "*fortitudo*" (28:3). In general, Nicholas's terminology is very fluid, very non-Scholastic. Indeed, Klaus Kremer speaks of "*die Promiskuität in der Terminologie*" bei Cusanus [p. 41 of his "Philosophische Überlegungen des Cusanus zur Unsterblichkeit der menschlichen Geistseele," *MFCG* 23 (1996), 21-70 (includes discussion)]. See n. 80 on p. 504 of my *Nicholas of Cusa on Wisdom and Knowledge*; see also n. 18 on p. 296 and n. 50 on p. 308 of my *Miscellany on Nicholas of Cusa*. See also my *Nicholas of Cusa's Metaphysic of Contraction*, pp. 102-103. See, above, n. 105 and n. 168 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*.

33. Even in this last of his works Nicholas does not forego the view that only God is Absolute, all else being contracted and finite. See my *Nicholas of Cusa's Metaphysic of Contraction*, pp. 98-102. Cf., above, n. 20 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*. See *DI* II, 9 (150:8-10).

34. At *NA* 8 (27:10-12) Nicholas makes this same point about Not-other: "*Quidditas igitur quae non-aliud, quidditatis ipsius aliud quidditas est* …."

35. Here (at 8:5) I agree with the Paris edition's "*posse ipsum*" and not with Codex Cusanus 219's "*posse ipsius*".

36. See Werner Beierwaltes's Ph.D. dissertation, *Lux intelligibilis. Untersuchung zur Lichtmetaphysik der Griechen* (University of Munich, 1957). See also Klaus Hedwig, *Sphaera Lucis. Studien zur Intelligibilität des Seienden im Kontext der mittelalterlichen Lichtspekulation* [Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, New Series, Vol. 18 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1980)].

37. *De Dato Patris Luminum* 2 (100). *De Quaerendo Deum* 2 (34). *Compendium* 1 (2) and 4 (8:5-6).

38. *De Deo Abscondito* 14. *De Quaerendo Deum* 2 (35:2-8) and 2 (37). Cf. *VS* 6 (14). *VS* 29 (87:20-22): sight does not see itself, for it is not colored.

39. See n. 37 and n. 38 above.

40. "… their [ultimate] Quiddity cannot be different": i.e., they cannot have differing [ultimate] Quiddities. See n. 19, n. 20, and n. 34 above. See also n. 135 of Notes to *De Beryllo*.

41. See the references in n. 25 above.

42. "… in intellectual power": "*in intellectuali posse* …." See n. 43 below.

43. "… by means of intelligible power": "*medio … intelligibilis posse* …." See n. 42 above. Nicholas here uses "intellectual power" and "intelligible power" interchangeably Cf. the references in n. 32 above.

44. *Simplex visio mentis* relates to the intellect, not to reason. On the distinction between reason (*ratio*) and intellect (*intellectus*) see Hermann Schnarr, *Modi essendi. Interpretationen zu den Schriften De docta ignorantia, De coniecturis und De venatione sapientiae von Nikolaus von Kues* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973). Cusa, *Ap*. 14 and 15 and 28. *Compendium*, Epilogue (45).

45. "… beyond all comprehensible power": "*supra omnem comprehensibilem*

*virtutem et potentiam* ….” See n. 32 above.

46. I Corinthians 9:24.

47. See n. 7 above.

48. “… or substracted from it”: “*nec ab eo separari aut minui*” (13:15). Regarding the whole of *De Apice* 13, cf. Anselm’s ontological argument.

49. The First is the First Beginning, viz., God. See the title of *DI* II, 2. Cf. *NA* 5 (18).

50. *DI* I, 5 (14). *Ap*. (end of 17 and beginning of 18). *VS* 13 (37:1-4).

51. “… for the sake of manifesting Himself”: “*per suam apparitionem*” (15:15-16). The context here suggests that “*per*” be taken in the sense of “for the sake of.” However, “through His Manifestation” would also be a not-unacceptable translation—on the assumption that here, as at 28:4-5, Nicholas is alluding to Christ, who is the Manifestation of God the Father.

52. “*De dato lumine*”—literally, “On the light that has been given”—is rendered concisely as “The Gift of Light.” “*De dato lumine*” (also thus called in *Ap*. 17) is an abbreviated form of the fuller title “*De Dato Patris Luminum*.” Nicholas wrote *De Dato* around the turn of the year 1445-46. See, above, n. 84 of Notes to *De Theologicis Complementis*.

53. “*De icona*” and “*De visu dei*” are alternate titles for *De Visione Dei*, written in 1453.

54. *De Quaerendo Deum* (1445).

55. This rubric (“*Memoriale apicis theoriae*”) is supplied by the editors of the Latin text.

56. See the references in n. 25 above.

57. See, above, n. 339 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*.

58. Possibility itself, or God, is beyond all finite existence—beyond existence insofar as we can understand existence. Similarly, God is beyond all possibility, insofar as we can understand possibility. Yet, just as in *De Apice* Nicholas symbolizes God as *Infinite Possibility* (cf. 11:4), so therein he also does not repudiate the conceptions or the names *Infinite Actuality* and *Infinite Being*. In *De Apice Theoriae* Nicholas is also not rejecting his earlier names for God, e.g., “*Possest*” and “*Non-aliud*.” Rather, he is simply suggesting that “*Posse ipsum*” is a more fitting and more theologically useful metaphor. See the passage marked by n. 26 above. Cf. *DI* I, 6 (16-17). *DP* 26. *DVD* 13 (58:9-12). *De Pace Fidei* 7 (21:1-4).

59. See n. 27 above.

60. See the references in n. 25 above.

61. *DI* II, 3 (111:14-15). *VS* 38 (112:12-22).

62. Here (at 21:4-5) Nicholas speaks of the human mind (*mens*) as *willing*. Like all medieval Christian philosophers Nicholas regarded the human will to be free in some respect or other (even when enslaved to sin). *DVD* 7 (27). *VS* 19 (54:18). *VS* 27 (82:13-14).

63. *VS* 16 (48:10-13). *De Dato Patris Luminum* 4 (108).

64. Things other than mind are also books (but not intellectual books) in which the mind can read the Divine intent. *Compendium* 7 (21:3-5): “In creatures, which are signs of the Uncreated Word, the Former reveals Himself in various ways in the various signs; and there cannot be any [created thing] that is not a sign of the manifestation of the Begotten Word.” See especially *De Genesi* 4 (171-173). Note also

*DB* 37:21-22: "Omnis igitur creatura est intentio voluntatis omnipotentis." *De Filiatione Dei* 2 (57:8-9): "In hoc mundo in variis particularibus obiectis ut in variis libris versatur studium nostrum."

Cf. *De Apice Theoriae* 24:5-7: "… the mind sees that it itself is a mode-of-manifestation of Possibility itself. And it sees that, likewise, this point holds true in the case of all existing things. Therefore, whatever-things-the-mind-sees are modes-of-manifestation of incorruptible Possibility."

Cf. the illustration of the painter, in *DM* 13 (148-149).

65. See n. 62 above.

66. *DM* 15. *VS* 32 (95).

67. That is, the mind sees that all things are a manifesting mode of Possibility.

68. *DI* II, 3 (110:22-23): "… the accident derives its own being from the substance." *NA* 11 (42-43).

69. See the reference in n. 18 above.

70. In this sentence (25:13-16) Nicholas is using "*esse corporalis*" ("material being") and "*corpus*" ("material object") interchangeably, not with a difference of meaning.

71. The reality of the Divine Trinity is deemed by Nicholas to be reflected in the trinitarian nature of created things. Examples of his other trinitarian illustrations, including mathematical illustrations, are found in *DI* I, 7. *DVD* 17. *CA* II, 9. *DB* 33. *VS* 23 (70:13-15). *VS* 31 (92). See, above, n. 35 of Notes to *De Beryllo*.

72. Augustine, *De Trinitate* 10.11.17 (*PL* 42:982). Cusa, *De Aequalitate* 26.

73. Nicholas makes plain that God's creating act is free. His occasional use of the words "*emanare*" and "*emanatio*," in various of his works, should not mislead. Cf. *DI* III, 3 (199:16-17), *NA* 21 (97:13-14), and *VS* 18 (52:10) with *De Genesi* 5 (178:6-7) and *VS* 39 (116:9). See, above, n. 94 of Notes to *De Beryllo* and n. 327 of Notes to *De Venatione Sapientiae*.

74. Nicholas's use here (at 28:2) of "*posse omnis potentiae*" signifies the same thing as does his use elsewhere (e.g., at 17:2) of "*posse omnis posse*."

75. Matthew 19:26.

76. Christ is the Image of God the Father (Hebrews 1:3). In *De Filiatione Dei* 3 (65) Nicholas likens the Son of God to a Mirror that is "without blemish, completely straight, most perfect, and without bounds." This Mirror reflects both the glory of God the Father and the participated splendor of the creation.