The Role of Sense Realism in the Initiation of Thomistic Metaphysics
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Usually the role of sense realism is to serve as an anchor for our concepts. We need to know that our concepts are connected to reality and sense realism provides that contact. But once the anchor catches, we busy ourselves with other things. I want to argue that the fact that the anchor catches is a most important thing with which to busy ourselves. In other words, the direct presence of something real in sense cognition is the *sine qua non* both for the development of a meaning of being different from *ens mobile* and for grasping the essence/existence distinction that fundamentally characterizes that unique meaning. I present the previous as a reply to the recent criticisms (Ashley, Deely, and Wippel) of the attempt to begin Aquinas’ metaphysics without an initial appreciation of the separateness from matter of *ens commune*. 